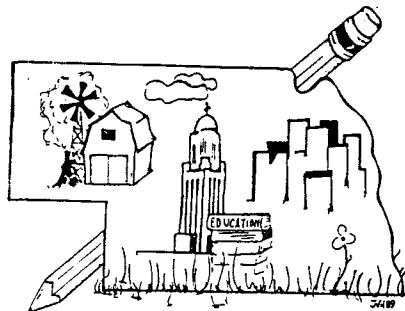


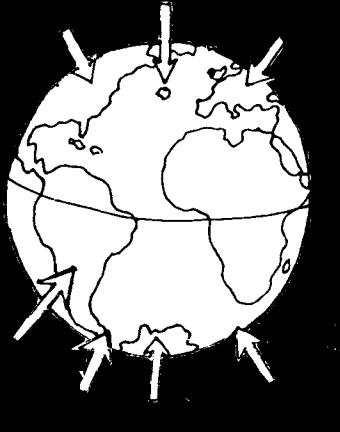
The Nebraska Observer

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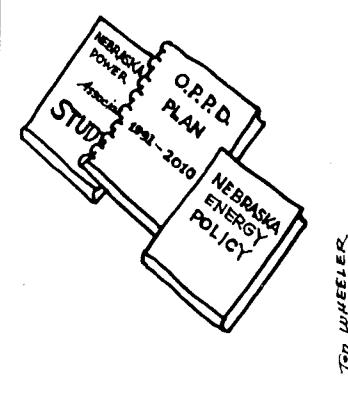


Energy Officials Blow Off Wind Power

Areas affected by Global Warming



Areas unaffected by Global Warming



by Frances Mendenhall

A few weeks ago, Time touted wind power as a source of electricity for public utilities. The article captioned a photo of wind turbines, "Oil wells of the 1990s?" (Time Jan. 13, 1992.)

Last summer, the Electric Power Research Institute did the same:

"Wind energy has come of age for bulk power generation. The tax credits that got things started have expired, and now hundreds of new wind turbines are being installed each year on their own economic merit. Our next big step is to broaden utility involvement in more parts of the country. A lot of folks just haven't taken wind seriously yet."

— Ed deMeo 6/91, EPRI Journal

Over in Iowa, the Iowa-Illinois Gas and Electric Company last November announced a joint venture between their subsidiary, InterCoast Energy Company, and U.S. Windpower. The purpose of the joint venture was "to develop, market and operate Midwest electric generation facilities which use wind as their primary source."

The joint venture, WindRiver Power Company, planned to open an office in Davenport to identify, evaluate and develop power sites in Iowa, Illinois, Nebraska, North Dakota, South Dakota, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri and Wisconsin. If it is decided that the project is feasible, WindRiver says it could begin to construct wind plants as early as 1994 and sell electricity for \$.05/kW-h.

Will wind be an option for Ne-

braska? Not in the foreseeable future, according to sources at the Nebraska Energy Office, the Nebraska Power Association, or Omaha Public Power District.

One objection to wind raised by Larry Kinyon of the Nebraska Energy Office was problems of infrastructure and maintenance. Kinyon said that wind farms in California had poor records for mechanical failure.

Brady Bancroft of the Rocky Mountain Institute said that that kind of thinking was no longer current. In the early 1980s government tax incentives moved investors to fund a wide variety of projects, many of which were better for getting deductions than dependable power. That changed in 1985, when the credits expired. After that, said Bancroft, only the proven technologies remained. Now, wind is cheaper than the national average, even without considering hidden environmental and social costs of burning fossil fuels. Regarding down time, the Iowa-Illinois press release cited 98 percent availability for its turbines.

The Omaha Public Power District has not given much consideration for incorporating wind into its grid. Mark Gautier of the company's corporate communications office responded to the copy of Iowa-Illinois Gas and Electric's press release which the Observer supplied him. It included performance, cost, and availability figures. Gautier calculated another figure, capacity. From the numbers supplied by Iowa-Illinois he pointed

out that the California wind turbines were actually generating electricity only 21 percent of the hours in a year. Reliability, plus the potential to offset peak loads (for air-conditioning in the summer) were important criteria for OPPD, he said. Besides, the marginal costs of burning coal are very low.

Hap Ellis, vice-president of marketing at U.S. Windpower, looks at the value of wind differently. He described a difficulty with the utility industry in understanding how wind fits or doesn't fit. "There is no question about Nebraska's value here," he said. "It has a resource." But to use it a utility must get familiar with the patterns, and learn how to work it into its grid. In California, there are predictable winds from May through October. Utilities there have learned to rely on it for three billion kW-h/year.

Ellis's interest is more than theoretical. "We want to be a vendor to the utility industry," he said. He also questioned whether the Nebraska energy officials who had ruled out wind had ever talked to anybody in his position, and he plans to contact them soon and discuss how a plant operates, the economics, etc. When that happens, he says, they will be stunned at recent improvements. Ellis says they have bid energy as low as \$.042/kW-h, which, he says, is competitive with new fossil plants.

U.S. Windpower, based in Livermore Calif., is considered to be the world's largest wind energy company. It is primarily engaged in the development, manufacture and operation of wind power plants throughout the world, but it is best known for its wind farm at Altamont Pass, California, which produces clean electricity for \$.07/kW-h. In 1990, according to the company's press release, wind turbines produced 760 million kW-hours, enough electricity for 125,000 homes. This comprises one to two percent of the state's electricity, and is expected to increase.

Michael Marvin of the American Wind Energy Association, the national trade association for the industry, also believes that wind could be serving Nebraskans. He quoted from a study done by the

Pacific Northwest Laboratory for the Department of Energy. The wind electric potential in Nebraska, he says is 99,200 megawatts, the equivalent of one and a half billion barrels of oil. (Nebraska now requires about 5,000 megawatts of power on peak and can generate 6,300 megawatts on peak including reserves.)

He believes that the capacity (the amount of time wind would be actually used) would be around 25 percent as opposed to 21 percent in California. As far as its usefulness in meeting peak demand, Marvin points out that no one knows the pattern yet for Nebraska. In Solano County, Calif., wind generators matched with the peak needs of the utilities up to 80 percent of the time. "No one option will fill 100 percent of the needs," he said. "Most older nuclear plants operate at a 44 percent capacity with coal and natural gas higher. There is a value in diversity."

Marvin was emphatic that the concerns of energy officials in Nebraska could be resolved. "Every concern raised by any utility has been raised by California," he said, "and all of them have been debunked. Pacific Gas and Electric now says they would have no problem using wind to supply up to 20 percent of their need without any problems maintaining the grid. Many utilities have raised a number of the same issues; they turned out to be complete red herrings."

As far as wind energy is concerned, the U.S. Department of Energy study done by Pacific Northwest Laboratory indicated that many Midwestern states have wind resources greatly exceeding those in California, where nearly all existing wind power development has occurred.

What Marvin and Ellis are talk-

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ing about, and what state energy officials need to be convinced of, is the actual details of filling the needs that wind doesn't meet, or fitting it into the grid. If, for instance, wind energy is not available at peak times in July, but is available at peak times in September, what other kinds of energy capacity is needed to have a reliable system? Marvin and Ellis suggested that they needed more information about existing options and wind patterns to answer specific questions, but given Nebraska's greater wind resources over California, each was confident he could come up with a cost-effective plan, in much the same way they determine plans for other sources that are not constant such as hydro power.

One reason why California's program has progressed as far as it has is that the state policy mandates that at least 50 percent of its new energy come from renewables, not counting Demand-Side Manage-

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Why Call Ollie North a Hero?

by Frances Mendenhall

Ollie North came to Omaha January 23 sponsored by an outfit called "Encouraging Productions," a committee of nine business persons whose goal is to provide positive messages to Omaha. Some people, including this writer, questioned whether Ollie North's efforts -- as well as his message -- were positive. Two dozen such people gathered outside the Red Lion to express their opposition. Most of the mainstream media ignored the opposition. Following is a speech given by this writer.

I want you to close your eyes and try to recall how you felt when you heard that President Reagan had called Ollie North a hero.

What does it mean to be a hero? To most of us heroism is courageous, selfless, and given in the service of a worthy goal. And of course, there are certain norms; you cannot steal even to help the poor. The end does not justify the means.

Some of my heroes are Dorothy Day, Harriet Tubman, Mother Jones, Rigoberta Menchu, and Aung San Sun Kyi, from Myanmar, the country we used to call Burma, who just won the Nobel Prize. These are the kinds of hero Maya Angelou would call "sheroes."

I also have some male heroes, people like Stephen Biko and Lech Walensa. Many heroes die rather than give in to evil. I am probably stubborn enough to do something like that but I'd just as soon not be asked to prove it.

Some of my heroes are here among us tonight, people who break the law for conscience. These people know that conscientious lawbreaking requires that you willingly accept the legal consequences of your act.

Oliver North is not a hero. He broke the law and then tried to hide his actions, then tried to blame what he did on his superiors. He portrayed himself as a good soldier, "just following orders" as long as it suited his purposes. Then when he needed a better courtroom strategy, he turned on his commanders and made himself out to be a scapegoat. Reagan may call this heroism. I call it covering your backside.

It was not conscience that motivated North to violate the law, but extremist ideology. North professes to be opposed to communism, which probably wasn't much of a threat when he was arming the contra terrorists to fight it, and is no threat at all now. The evil empire that Ollie used to justify his super-patriotism is gone, but the threat of a secret government unaccountable to congress is still with us. Isn't a government that can't be held accountable the thing we feared the most about communism?

North professes to oppose communism, and justifies breaking the law to serve his cause. But isn't the belief that the end justifies the means a core tenet of communism? He believed, as communist extremists believe, that a small cadre of elite leaders know better than the people and should have the right to act as they see fit, above or apart from the law. Is this democracy? Is this patriotism?

Regardless what the appeals court, with two of its three judges appointed by Reagan himself, said about North's conviction, nobody questions what he did: North lied to congress, shredded the evidence, and financially benefitted from the web of subterfuge. Oliver North is not a hero and his suspended conviction is not an acquittal.

Nobody said life was fair. Some of the real heroes, like Aung San Sun Kyi, are in prison while Oliver North is free, enjoying his \$23,000 a year military pension and hun-

dreds of thousands of dollars in speakers' fees, and now we learn he also has been funded by another extremist, The Rev. Sun Myung Moon. Had not the congressional hearings resulted in immunity given North for his testimony, he undoubtedly would now be serving time.

Instead, North is with us tonight, in all his chauvinistic macho glory. And, since we are accustomed to hearing lies from our government, he will not disappoint us. He will certainly also tell the adoring crowd that he was exonerated. In fact, he just slipped through the cracks of justice.

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Peery's Allegations of 'Done Deal' Consistent With Pattern of Corruption in Nuclear Politics

... some criminals are more equal than others:



by Frances Mendenhall

Now that former compact Director Ray Peery has been sentenced for his embezzlement conviction, he has begun to tell stories about the nasty politics of nuclear waste. There are important lessons to be learned.

Peery, in interviews with Lincoln Journal-Star reporter Marc Krasnowsky, published starting the day after his sentencing, told of the meetings when Nebraska was selected as dump host site.

At this meeting in Kansas City, Mo., between Dec. 7 and Dec. 15, 1987, the compact commission met ostensibly to site the facility. In fact, it appears to have been a done deal before anybody got to Kansas City.

On Dec. 8 the commissioners voted to accept "10 conditions" for siting the dump. The conditions had not been developed by representatives from all five states, but by Norm Thorson of Nebraska, a UNL law professor who was an aide to then-Gov. Kay Orr.

After that US Ecology was, one week later, to offer its recommendation of which state, based on three simple criteria. On Dec. 15, in New Orleans, the commission voted 5-4 to select Nebraska. The only dissenting vote came from Nebraska's commissioner Dennis Grams.

That much is not in dispute, although the media reported very little on the decision as it was happening. It is damning enough that such a decision should be made with no

accountability or popular input. But now, from what Peery is describing as the real explanation of what happened, Nebraska actually acquiesced to the decision because officials believed that the economic benefits would outweigh the citizens' objections.

Peery described Grams' vote as "window dressing."

The real decision, he said, was made on Dec. 7, in his first-floor Marriot Hotel room. He described the event as follows:

Among those present were then-commission Chairman Hall Bohlinger of Louisiana, current Chairwoman Greta Dicus of Arkansas, and John Campbell from the Kansas attorney general's office.

Nebraska's then-commissioner Dennis Grams, who headed the state Department of Environmental Control, might have been there. Norm Thorson, Orr's special adviser on low-level waste, definitely was.

After some bantering about why Nebraska didn't just go ahead and volunteer, Thorson presented Orr's 10 conditions.

"It was understood by everybody that they were Nebraska's conditions," Peery said. "If we would not agree to these conditions, and we selected Nebraska, Nebraska would take a walk."

Relieved that Nebraska was willing to take the facility, "we gave them the conditions that night," he said. "Everyone said 'yeah.'"

Then Thorson laid out three simple selection criteria, in place of a complex, weighted scheme, that would favor Nebraska, Peery said.

After the Dec. 8 meeting, Peery met with US Ecology Vice President Rich Paton.

"On no uncertain terms," Peery said, "I directed Rich to do his job, and that I didn't care, the commission didn't care, what in the hell they did or how they did it. But they damn well better have but one answer when they finished doing it. And that answer better be that Nebraska is recommended as the host state — pure, simple, no ifs, ands, buts about it."

"Rich understood the directions very well,"

"None of the other states would have taken the facility," Peery said. "Nebraska was the one state with the right political atmosphere."

Although the others at the meeting contradict Peery's version of what happened, none offered any explanation of any other state being willing or otherwise considered as a site. Rich Paton said that almost every set of selection criteria considered favored Nebraska. He did not, in the Journal-Star article, say what those criteria were. In fact, Nebraska is the farthest removed from the center of n-waste production of the five states, most of which comes from Arkansas and Louisiana. It is also almost entirely situated above the largest aquifer on this continent.

The reality is that the decision was made in secret, and if allegations like Peery's can teach us anything, it is that such decisions should be open to public scrutiny.

What happened after that is well known.

Nebraskans, even though their main newspaper and the Republican administration tried to force the dump down their throats, resisted. Bee keeper Sam Welsch teamed up with Lincoln political activist Lynn Mooren to organize Nebraskans for the Right to Vote. Initiative 402 was placed on the ballot in 1988. Public sentiment that summer was overwhelmingly against the dump.

That would change in the last weeks before the election. Out-of-state money poured in from sources such as Arkansas Power and Light, and the under-funded Nebraskans for the Right to Vote couldn't overcome their ad-buying power. Radiologist Sam Meher moved to Nebraska and started talking about the state's responsibility to accept medical n-waste. Most of the waste stream, after all, was just "gowns and booties" from hospitals, and shouldn't we do our part to dispose of that? Many physicians and university leaders signed on with him.

The citizens with questions were dis-

counted and outshouted.

402 lost at the polls.

The siting process began.

But the questions did not go away. Citizens in the three potential host counties organized, some in support, most in opposition. EPA whistleblower Hugh Kaufman became a citizen of Nora, in Nuckolls County, and added his often impolite voice to the debate. The citizens of Nora, unprepared to defend themselves against a juggernaut, were glad to have him on their side. Many questions were raised about the geological suitability of each site. Other questions came up about the legality of the process. There were numerous complaints about violations of Open Meetings Laws. Perhaps the biggest bone of contention was Gov. Orr's promise that the dump would not be sited in the absence of "community consent." The pro-dump crowd never offered to put it up to a popular vote. Last fall, Boyd county rancher Lowell Fisher fasted for two months to protest the dump.

Later it came out that not one rad of Nebraska's waste stream was the "gowns and booties" from Nebraska's nuclear medicine. All of that had such a short half-life that it was disposed of on-site. No one apologized for the deception at the time it had mattered.

Boyd County was selected in Jan. 1990. Was anybody surprised that US Ecology chose to stay away from pitbull Hugh Kaufman down in Nuckolls County? Still, they claimed that the siting was based entirely on technical considerations. But Ray Peery is now saying it was political all along. The governor says Peery's allegations, if true, would confirm "my worst fears. ... It jeopardizes the credibility of the siting process." Some questioned whether the process ever had any credibility.

Now, it appears that Nebraska may be one of three or fewer states in the nation that is actually meeting the target dates for n-waste disposal. Many are fearful that the whole process will be reconsidered so that no other facilities are built and Nebraska gets pressured to take much more waste than just the five states. Some reward for doing our civic duty.

But such is the politics of nuclear power. It simply isn't compatible with open government and democracy. Never mind fairness. It surely will get worse. They used to tell us that uranium was cheap to mine (about the same time they told us that n-power would be so cheap we wouldn't have to meter it). Whether that was true or not, it won't continue to be cheap. Now that the federal government is getting out of the weapons-grade uranium procurement business, the cost of mining lower grade fuel is sure to rise. This will introduce a whole new layer of power plays and deception on top of those we now live with regarding waste disposal.

This is truly a sad state of affairs. And somehow there is no joy in saying "we told you so."

FCC to Let Baby Bells Transmit Cable TV



At a recent meeting of the Midwest Regional Public Policy Committee of the National Federation of Local Cable Programmers (NFLCP) a Federal Communication Commission (FCC) announcement was discussed. The FCC announced that it will allow your local telephone company to carry video programming to your television set via telephone lines. Under the FCC's video dial tone policy, local phone companies will not be required to obtain franchises in order to transmit video programming as are cable companies, nor will they be required to provide public access channels. The FCC is accepting public comments on this policy up to February 3. They need to know that they

should add provisions for public access. I urge you to write letters to :

Federal Communications Commission
1919 M Street NW
Washington, D.C. 20554

Send courtesy copies of your letter or postcard to your congressional representative. The cable tv industry will be greatly affected by this new technology and the ensuing policies. More will be said about this in later Cox Watches.

Cox deprives cable tv viewers of quite a few programs. For example, Deep Dish TV is the first national grassroots television network that distributes independent, public access television programming to public access centers, media arts centers and home dish owners around the country. Its programming embraces a wide range of critical issues including AIDS, housing, reproductive rights, the environment, labor, and U.S. military intervention, to name just a few. Deep Dish has contacted me requesting tapes from public access users and other video producers and Deep Dish also wants to have Cox Cable air Deep Dish's wide array of programs on the public access channel. Unfortunately Cox refuses to air anything that is not produced here in Omaha; so, Omahans will

never see Deep Dish unless they leave Omaha.

On January 13 Richard Hudlin attended another Cable Television Advisory Committee (CTAC) meeting and pointed out that Michael Kohler, Communications Manager for Cox Cable, said that as of January Public Access users will be allowed to make one copy of their shows while taping them or Cox would make a copy for them at no charge. Mr. Kohler pointed out that Cox had intended to install VCR machines in the hubsites but the VCRs simply had not come in yet. He said by the next CTAC meeting (February 10) the VCRs should be installed. He offered to reimburse Mr. Hudlin if he had been charged \$7.50 for a copy.

On January 16 Mr. Hudlin, Mr. Kohler, two Cox engineers, Robert Hall, who is a CTAC member, another Cox employee attended the meeting at the North Omaha Public Access hubsite where Mr. Hudlin was to demonstrate how he copied from 1/2" to 3/4" videotape and vice versa. Also present was Dave Weber, a Public Access user who had also been told not to copy from 1/2" to 3/4" and vice versa.

During the demonstration the two engineers claimed that they were unable to copy from 1/2" to 3/4" videotape and that, in fact, it was impossible. Interestingly enough, dur-

ing the demonstration when Mr. Hudlin attempted this procedure it didn't work even though I have seen Mr. Hudlin do this more than once. When Mr. Hudlin reminded the engineers that this conversation was being taped they immediately began to say they would try to find out why it didn't work this time even though previously they had said it is impossible to execute this procedure. Fortunately, everything these engineers said is on cassette tape. It's amazing what these engineers said on that tape even after Mr. Hudlin told them the conversation was being recorded as was the CTAC meeting on January 13. Also Dave Weber pointed out that Howard Swain, the Public Access Coordinator, has a VCR connected to a 3/4" videotape machine, and that is how he makes copies and charges \$7.50 for them. How can Mr. Kohler say that when the VCRs are installed this can be done, then the two engineers say it can't be done, yet Howard Swain does it all the time (for \$7.50) and Mr. Hudlin has done it several times? Clearly there is no legitimate reason to prohibit Public Access users from copying from 1/2" to 3/4" videotapes. *The next meeting of the National Federation of Local Cable Programmers is scheduled for Feb. 15, 12:00 at the W. Dale Clark Library.*

Still Waiting for an Arabian Equine Match Race

by Steve Stone

One crystalline June morning I was driving through the glorious southeastern Nebraska countryside on my way to an Arabian show at the Deshler Quarter Horse track, anticipating nothing more than a sedate day of Halter, English Pleasure, and Mounted Native Costume.

Upon arriving, I found a friend, an Arabian racing enthusiast, in an advanced state of frustration due to having just suffered a thorough verbal drubbing from an asserting Racing Quarter Horse/Thoroughbred trainer who had spent the better part of the morning making invidious comparisons between his steeds' performance and Arabian track times at short distances under light weights on an oval track.

He had been depicting my friend's fine Arabians as virtual equine quadriplegics.

Only a few moments elapsed before this emissary re-emerged from his lair, having sighted new game for his inquisitorial machinations. He was virtually salivating at the prospect as he approached.

I was introduced as a co-owner of an Arabian stallion that had just set a new Arabian record at a mile and a half (some fifteen seconds slower than Secretariat's TB record) and had placed Top Ten in the National Arabian Competitive Trail Ride only thirty days later.

Attempting to avoid licking his chops in anticipation of the upcoming carnage, he said, "Son, I'd love to see our horses get

together for a match race." The Neanderthalic lips were in the process of saying these words when, suddenly, I was struck by an inspiration — not an everyday two-bit bright idea, but a genuine inspiration.

"Come on, whaddaya say?" he continued before I managed to get a word in sidewise:

"Say, that's really a superb concept. Yes, I think that would suit me very well, indeed. my horse hasn't had a really good workout yet this year."

At this, the beady eyes narrowed in anticipation. He could see me coming.

I continued, "But let's try to make it worth our time and trouble. Tell you what. Let's make it for a purse of" (and here I specified a sum of gargantuan proportions well beyond the wagering range of an ordinary mortal) "for the horse that wins two out of three races."

The spatulate fingers fairly twitched, and a tremor of sheer greed ran along his hirsute spine. His mind lay open to me like a book set in headline type: "I GOT ME A SUCKER."

"Furthermore," I continued, "I'll put my stallion up against any nine-year-old or older stallion you have or can get hold of. There will be three races. The distances will be one mile, ten miles, and one hundred miles." The bushy eyebrows did not flinch, so I knew the full implication of what I had just stipulated had not yet sunk in. "Any horse who fails to start or finish any race forfeits the match."

By now avarice had its stony grip upon his heart, and he was not to be headed.

"Here is how it will be arranged. The one

mile race will be run under Jockey Club rules. The ten-miler will be a cross-country point-to-point race at catchweights. The one hundred miler will be held under American Endurance Ride Conference rules."

For the first time, a faint cloud actually, the merest shadow flitted across his minuscule brow: he had not known of the existence of

The spatulate fingers fairly twitched, and a tremor of sheer greed ran along his hirsute spine. His mind lay open to me like a book set in headline type: "I GOT ME A SUCKER."

the American Endurance Ride Conference or its rules. But the tiny overcast vanished, for he still felt that he had my money almost in his mildewed billfold.

"Now, just so we don't make this a long, drawn-out, tedious affair — we wouldn't want anyone getting bored — we will run the three races on three consecutive days.

At long last a ray of dawn appeared on the primordial brow. Suddenly the grimy nostrils flared as if sensing a trap. His mind, somewhat less than agile, leaped this way and that, seeking a loophole. He began to show panic as the firm footing beneath his feet began to metamorphose into quicksand.

A moment of silence developed, the kind that my grandmother called a pregnant pause. I waited. Then I drove home the

clincher: "We'll run the hundred miler first, the ten miler second, and the mile on the last day."

His huge maw gaped wordlessly, exposing vast areas of tarnished dentine. Reason left his as surely and swiftly as swallows leave well, you you where swallows leave from. He cast his eyes about desperately.

Suddenly, without a sound, he whirled about, departing at velocity that would have awed his equine charges, and I thought I heard a phrase being thrown over one denim-clad shoulder, "I ain't got no time for this kind of (expletive deleted)."

And we saw no more of him that day or any day.

(Lest it be thought that I am from the Marquis de Sade school of wagering, I wish to have it recorded for history that I did not even mention the final condition for the one hundred miler, namely, that the horses compete barefoot!)

The challenge for a match of this type was published in several midwestern equine publications from time to time.

It never had a taker.

Board of Pardons Would Have to Commute Sentence

Odds Strongly Against Release With 'Life Without Parole' Provision

Editor's Note: LB327 would allow Nebraska judges to substitute life without parole sentences for the death penalty. The following is from the newsletter of Nebraskans Against the Death Penalty.

No act of the Nebraska Legislature can preclude or limit the constitutionally-granted authority of the Nebraska Board of Pardons. Thus it is legally conceivable that a person sentenced to life without parole (LWOP) under LB 327 could have his or her sentence commuted by the Board of Par-

dons, and might ultimately be released from prison.

Obstacles to Commuting LWOP Sentence

However, for several reasons Nebraskans Against the Death Penalty does not believe that such a legal possibility ought to get in the way of support for LB 327.

First, to say that the existence of the pardon power means that LB 327 does not guarantee that there will never be parole is the same as saying we do not currently have a death penalty in Nebraska. The

same pardon power which could commute a sentence of LWOP could presently commute a death sentence, and release from prison someone sentenced to die. For some reason, we never hear the existence of the pardon power offered as an objection to the death penalty. Therefore, we do not think it is any more valid as an objection to LWOP.

Second, as a practical matter, we believe that commutations of LWOP sentences would be extremely rare. The three-person Nebraska Board of Pardons is a political body consisting of the three highest-ranking executive officers of the state.

We cannot even imagine the Pardon Board making someone convicted of an exceptionally heinous crime eligible for release from prison.

Indeed, it is more likely that a death sentence would be commuted than would an LWOP sentence, given the discomfort that many people have with the death penalty. California imposes both death and LWOP sentences for first-degree murder. A 1990 study by the California Governor's office showed that no LWOP-sentenced prisoners had been released from prison in the past 25 years. In that same time period, two death sentences were commuted to terms of years, one of those by then Governor Reagan, a proponent of the death penalty.

A San Francisco Chronicle report about the study said, "Virtually all of the 733 men and 27 women in California sentenced to life without parole will spend the rest of their lives there and die there." More telling is the following observation from the Chronicle article: "While Robert Alton Harris has had his effort to escape the gas chamber reviewed 20 times in state and federal courts at enormous expense, the new lifers are simply removed from the public eye while they languish in prison."

Under current Nebraska law,

commutation of a death sentence would ordinarily result in a life sentence, which would require further commutation to make a prisoner eligible for release. LB 327, by creating a LWOP sentence and retaining the basic life sentence, keeps the same structure. Thus, the most likely scenario where someone sentenced to LWOP seeks commutation is that the commutation, if granted, would merely be to a straight life sentence.

Under that scenario, the prisoner would not be released; he or she would still have to convince the Board of Pardons to commute the

sentence a second time before he or she would even be eligible for parole. Even then, under an amendment offered by

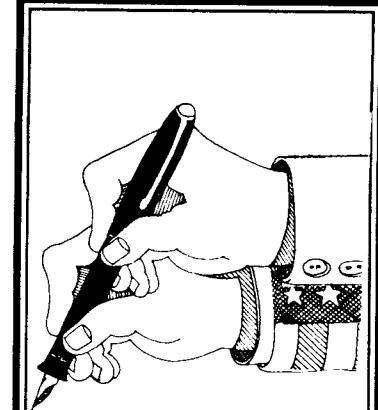
'...in California no Life-without-parole-sentenced prisoners had been released from prison in the past 25 years.'

Senator Chambers, the prisoner would be required to serve the maximum term of years, with good time, before any actual release occurred. The chance of all this occurring is minute.

If LB 327 is enacted, the Legislature will be on record intending that persons sentenced to LWOP should never be released. While that intent cannot legally bind the Board of Pardons, we believe that the Board is likely to give it great weight.

When the Board of Pardons denied Wili Otey's commutation request this past summer, both Governor Nelson and Attorney General Stenberg stated that their primary motivation for denying commutation was that the Legislature and the courts had decided that the penalty is appropriate. It is likely that we will hear the same statement when the Board denies commutations of LWOP sentences, if LB 327 passes.

Finally, whether the ultimate criminal sentence is death or LWOP, existence of the pardon authority is essential. Pardon or commutation is the only way that many people wrongly convicted of crimes can get redress. Every state in the nation which has LWOP instead of the death penalty retains the executive pardon authority. The proposal embodied in LB 327 is nothing new or unusual.



Nebraska Delegation

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Washington, DC 20510
(202) 224-4224
(402) 437-5591 (Lincoln)
(402) 341-1776 (Omaha)
(308) 632-3595 (Scottsbluff)

Sen. Bob Kerrey
316 Hart Senate Bldg.
Washington, DC 20510
(202) 224-6551
(402) 437-5246 (Lincoln)
(402) 391-3411 (Omaha)
(308) 632-3595 (Scottsbluff)

House

First District
Rep. Doug Bereuter
2446 Rayburn Bldg.
Washington, DC 20515
(202) 225-4806
(402) 438-1598 (Lincoln)
(402) 727-0888 (Fremont)

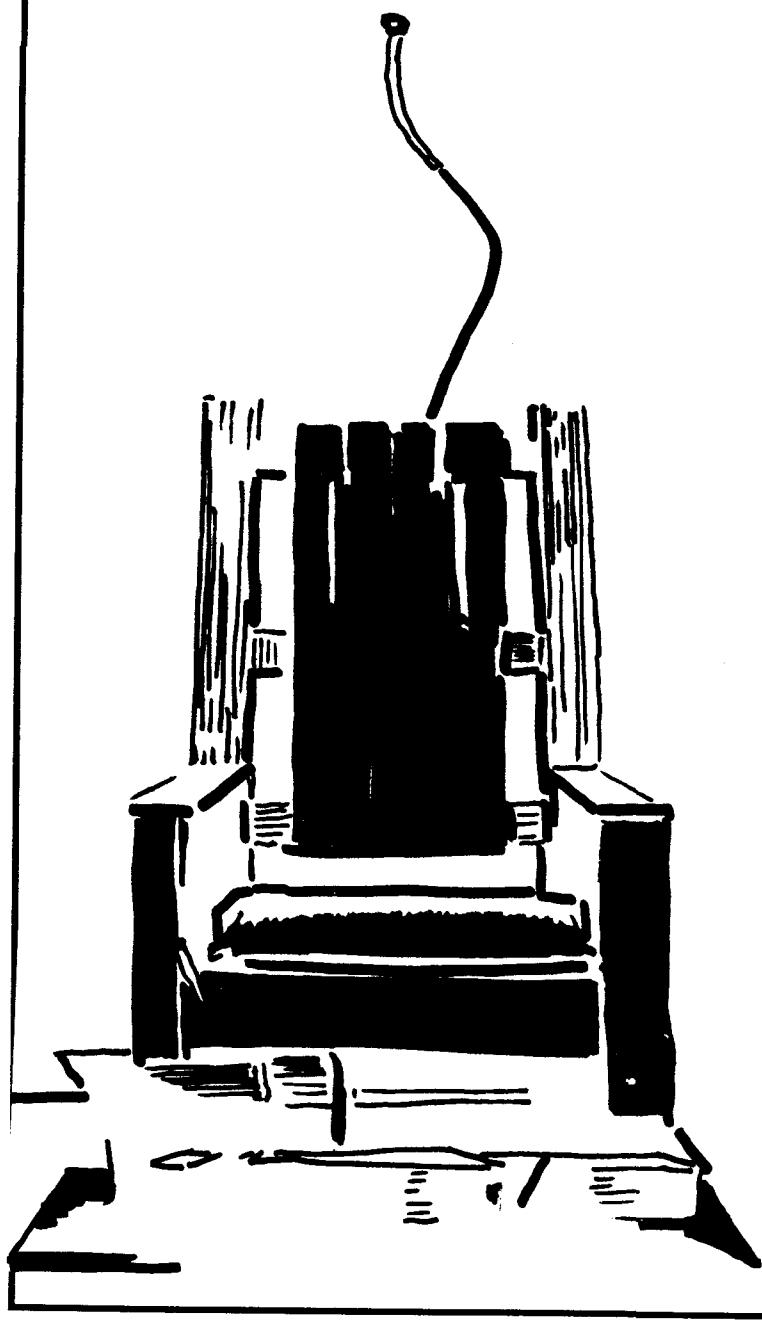
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Third District
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President George Bush
The White House
Washington, DC 20500



Roussel, FDA Fear Climate of Abortion in U.S.

by Nancy McVicar

The abortion pill.

More than 100,000 women in France have taken the drug RU-486 also called Mifepristone, as an alternative to surgical abortion in the first seven weeks of pregnancy.

But some scientists believe the same drug that can stop a fertilized egg from living in the womb also has life-saving properties.

RU-486 has been shown to halt the growth of certain tumors, particularly in breast cancer, which claims the lives of almost 45,000 American women each year.

Research scientists in the United States have watched their supplies of the drug evaporate, however, as political opposition to the drug has heated up in recent months.

"The politics of abortion are blocking this drug," said Dr. William Regelson, a cancer specialist at the Medical College of Virginia. "The right-to-lifers are trying to stop it any way they can, because if *Roe v. Wade* is reversed, they don't want doctors to have access to this pill."

Regelson said that if RU-486 is approved for any use in this country, doctors could prescribe it for other uses, including abortion.

"It would be between a woman and her doctor, and anti-abortion pickets could not block the doorway. That scares [abortion foes] to death," he said.

Besides possible use in breast cancer, the drug has shown effectiveness in treating other diseases, according to testimony before a congressional subcommittee last fall. They include an inoperable brain cancer; endometriosis, a condition that can contribute to infertility; and Cushing syndrome, a rare but often fatal endocrine disorder.

Some scientists think it might even help cure obesity.

"It is my opinion that if RU-486 were not an abortifacient, it would be considered a major medical breakthrough," Regelson said.

Although the drug has long been approved for abortions in France and China, and was granted approval in Britain last summer it is not being tested in the United States because its French manufacturer fears a boycott of its other products.

"We are not ready to consider the marketing of RU-486 in your country because we consider that abortion is not widely accepted in the U.S. either by medical or political opinion," said Ariel Mouttet, director of international marketing for Roussel-Uclaf in Paris. "We don't want to be involved in this abortion controversy."

She acknowledged that the company has allowed some small studies of the drug in the United States in recent years for Cushing syndrome and for abortion, but said there is currently only one small study involving brain cancer.

Mouttet said she was unaware that the New Hampshire Legislature voted in May to invite testing of the drug in its state, or that other politicians have expressed support for RU-486.

Nor did she seem impressed that the American Medical Association, American Public Health Association, American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists, and American Association for the Advancement of Science have formally recognized the medical importance of the drug and urged its testing.

"There is too much controversy," she said. "The climate there is not right."

The company has heard from a coalition of anti-abortion groups, she said -- groups that voiced strong opposition to further testing of RU-486 in the United States, groups that dismiss reports of cancer breakthroughs.

"Nobody in the pro-life movement has ever been opposed to research on any chemical or drug that will help a person suffering from any disease, but RU-486 does not fall into that category," said Judie Brown, president of the American Life League.

"The focus of that drug has always been to abort children."

Brown said she read the testimony of medical researchers who praised the drug in hearings last fall before a House subcommittee, and she doesn't put much stock in what they had to say.

"It is the abortion pill, and anything else that might be said about it has to be taken with a grain of salt."

The National Right to Life Committee's education director echoes that belief.

"There is no conclusive scientific evidence whatsoever that RU-486 has any proven use except to kill unborn babies," said Richard Glasow. "These studies are merely an attempt to create a groundswell of support, to turn it from a death drug into something benign or beneficial."

Regelson, one of the scientists who wants to test the drug for breast cancer and other ailments, disagrees.

He tried to start a breast cancer trial with the drug in conjunction with the National Institutes of Health. Roussel-Uclaf initially expressed interest, but later changed its mind about supplying the drug for the study, he said.

Regelson said the company's change of heart came soon after abortion foes "began agitating and threatening an international boycott" against the company.

Soon after, the U.S. Food and Drug Administration issued an import alert, effectively banning the drug from this country.

The pill's proponents claim the FDA took the action for political reasons instead of medical ones, under pressure from conservative congressmen who oppose abortion.

The import alert was issued after Frank Young, then FDA commissioner received letters from Sen. Jesse Helms, R-N.C., and 11 other congressmen asking why the drug was not on its list of drugs to be prohibited from reaching the public here.

The FDA said the ban was imposed after inquiries were made by the public about the availability of RU-486.

The import alert, which orders the drug seized at the border, is an action normally

reserved for dangerous or fraudulent medications.

"There was a safety concern that individuals might bring it into the country and use it without being monitored by a physician," said Susan Cruzan, a spokeswoman for the agency.

She said the ban was not aimed at blocking legitimate research.

Regelson disagrees.

"This FDA action is strictly political hokum," he said. "The drug is no threat to our society. It is so closely controlled by the manufacturer that no one can import this drug for personal use."

It is available only through doctors to women who hold a national health card in the countries where it is approved, he said.

Whether political support for testing in this country will have any effect on the company of the FDA, the sentiment for testing seems to be building.

U.S. Rep. Ron Wyden, D-Ore., who conducted the hearings on RU-486 last fall has a bill pending to rescind the FDA ban.

Steve Jenning, staff director for Wyden's subcommittee, said the ban was more symbolic than necessary.

"It sent a poor political message to the company that the climate was not right here for continued research," he said.

New York City Mayor David Dinkins sent letters to 33 other city mayors asking them to join him in a campaign to persuade the drug company and President Bush to allow "this potential breakthrough drug to be exported and tested" here.

"American women should be entitled to the same reproductive rights as French women," Dinkins said.

And New Hampshire, the state that gave George Bush his second-largest margin of victory in 1988, broke with the president on

the RU-486 issue, passing a resolution asking the FDA to lift its import alert and inviting Roussel-Uclaf to test the drug there.

California and Minnesota are considering similar proposals.

The Florida Legislature will be asked to do the same, said Carolyn Pardue, a lobbyist for Planned Parenthood Federation of Florida who is scouting the state for sponsors for a similar resolution.

"I really find it so offensive that women have to take their health care decisions to a political body, but that's what is happening," she said.

State Rep. Ben Gruber, D-Coral Springs, supports testing of the drug in this country.

"It looks promising and we should be able to study it here," said Gruber, who predicted that RU-486 would be an issue in the 1992 presidential campaign.

"It's a crime to let politics omit an excellent medication that could be beneficial to lots of people," said Gruber, a gynecologist.

He supports research on the drug for all of its uses, including as an alternative to surgical abortion.

"It can be used up to eight weeks [into pregnancy] instead of surgical abortion, so it would give women more options," he said.

He predicted that if New Hampshire is successful in getting the drug company to set up testing there, "it will just take off across the country."

But, he said, even if testing began tomorrow, it would be at least five years before it could be approved by the FDA for use here.

"The way the FDA works, they don't care what testing has been done in other countries," Gruber said. "We think our testing here is safer and more thorough."

*Reprinted with permission
Sun-Sentinel, Fort Lauderdale, Fla.*

Letter to Editor

To the editor:

Legislators should vote against the death penalty in Nebraska this month.

The death penalty has not helped to stop criminals from committing crimes. States that don't have the death penalty do not have higher crime rates than other states that do.

The death penalty also doesn't ever let the criminal make up for his or her crime in any way. A life sentence in prison could help make that possible. Prisoners could work and pay some of the earnings back to the victim's family.

Finally, anybody could be wrongly ac-

cused of murder. There is always a chance that someone on Death Row is innocent. It makes us just as bad to kill a prisoner as the prisoner was when he killed his victim. Killing a prisoner is a crime in itself. We have to stop the killing not increase it.

You can protect innocent people without the death penalty. Life imprisonment is enough.

I really think that some people on Death Row are killers, but that doesn't make it any better to kill them. After all, a dead person can never say he's sorry.

Chris Belli
Age 11

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Wild Fire Tommy and Dehli Belly George

Dear Lulu:



Dear Lulu:

I teach my Methodist Sunday School class and last Sunday we were talking about phlegm and President Bush's eruption in Japan came up. Many of the class felt the President may have been embarrassed by the incident so they decided to write to him. I thought your readers would enjoy some of their thoughts:

Dear President Bush, I'm real sorry to hear about your problems in Japan. My mom calls it an "upchuck" because our dog Chuck does it everyday and when we see him gittin', ready we quick say "up Chuck" and he sits right up and forgets what he was doin'. Tell Mrs. Barbara hello from me. Love, Spanky.

Dear Sir: You might wanna start carrying a few Baggies around with you. Please say hi to your dog. Love, Susie.

Dear Your Holiness: Whenever I do what you done in Japan my mommy tells me I said hello to the carpet and she cleans it up with Clorox. What did your mommy do? Love, Alison.

Dear Mr. George: One time I rode the Octopus at the fair with my cousin and I screamed and screamed until they took us down and boy was she mad. Did those Jupunese people scream? Send me a picture

of what happened. Tell Barbarella hello for me. Love, Butch.

Dear Mr. Ruler: My Uncle Ralph use to come over to our house and every time he'd buck on mom's dinner table and then leave so now when we lose our donuts mom says we talk to Ralph on the big white phone. Hope this helps you, Your Highness.

Love, Tim.

P.S. My mom likes you but my dad doesn't.

Dear Lulu:

You know I just love that George Bush but if he doesn't like Japanese people why would he go over there and act like that? I mean, he gets invited to a steak dinner and then deliberately throws up on the Prime Minister's leg! Where are his manners? I mean, a simple "no thank you" would have been sufficient! And what are the cattle people going to think of this in an election year? I suppose we should remember Pearl Harbor, but this is ridiculous.

Love, Upset in Upland.

Dear Upset:

It was a "state" dinner, probably serving some of those lovely uncooked Japanese delicacies, where poor George lost his cookies. We doubt George deliberately wretched but apparently was struck with "la grippe", the flux, the back door trot, the Delhi belly, the Hong Kong dog, or, as our Aunt Dora used to say, an evacuation. Barbara looks like a good mother to me and I'm sure he was in good hands. Actually, Barbara looks like a good President. What does George look like, except peaked? Thanks for writing.

Love, Lulu.

Dear Lulu:

Now I read that some world championship wrestling referee claims that wrestling has "scripts" and he got hurt when Wild Fire Tommy didn't read the script and pushed Mike Rotunda into the referee. So the referee

got hurt and he hired some lawyer to sue World Championship Wrestling. Isn't this something? How could anybody in their right mind claim that wrestling is fixed? Why, I saw Hulk Hogan defend America right here in Omaha and to say that was fixed is unAmerican! How could somebody even think that they'd make up people with names like Rowdy Roddy Piper and Bruce the Barber Beefcakes? I'm disturbed.

Love, Hubcap Herman from Herman.

Dear Hubcap:

I think you are definitely right and disturbed. No wrestler I ever met could read his preprinted class notes, let alone a script. Keep up those great American ideals. And let me know when you get out of the home.

Love, Lulu.

Dear Lulu:

My boy listens to some terrible band called Guns & Accordians and I just heard on the radio that they are the dictator of Georgia and they moved it to Russia, of all places! Should I burn all his records?

Love, A Mother in Milford.

Dear Mother:

First, I think the band your son is adoring is "Guns & Roses", although yours sounds more interesting. Second, I think you're confusing the band with President Gamsakhurdia, who may be a "former" everything. Third, the Georgia on your mind wasn't moved but like Prague, Nebraska, there are two of them, the other Georgia being in Russia, of children but maybe you should stop. Best of luck.

Love, Lulu.

Dear Lulu:

Okay, so now Communism is dead and the Soviets are so broke they can't see straight

and all their weapons are stored in some unknown hole, never to be used again and we won the arms race (where's the trophy?) and we're broke and interest rates are so low it's a great time to buy a house but nobody can afford the gas to go look at the house let alone buy it and I'm just wondering who really won this fiasco we've been living the last years?

Love, Wondering in Wood Lake.

Dear Wondering:

God always wins. Please pay more attention.

Love, Lulu.

Dear Lulu:

TV Guide Saved My Life! Yes that's right Lulu, TV Guide saved my life and I want to pass this on to your readers. I've always loved TV Guide, with its true stories and behind-the-scenes scoops. We'll, this one day it came in the mail and I sat down to study it like I always do. So I got to Wednesday afternoon and there it was — "Geraldo discusses communicable diseases transmitted by exchanging fluids," 3:30 p.m., Channel 23. Well, I about fainted dead away. Only last year I had exchanged the fluid in my Dodge with the fluid in my Plymouth. Ever since that day I've felt faint and real dizzy whenever I thought of it. I thought it was because I'd had a hernia operation the day before, but now I knew the real answer! Well, I watched the program, and it wasn't quite about Chrysler Guide and please tell your readers.

Love, Thankful in Thedford.

Dear Thankful:

Done and thanks ever so much for the rare glimpse into your daily life.

Love, Lulu.



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Holy Cross Order: 'We Prayerfully Seek Closure...'

Pedophile Priests Cost Church \$300 Million

Editor's Note: Burtchaell's 1982 book, *Rachel Weeping*, compared the pro-choice movement to the Holocaust and slavery.

WASHINGTON — For much of his 25 years of priestly service at the University of Notre Dame, Father James Burtchaell had enjoyed a national reputation as a theologian, professor and writer. Few churchmen were as vehement in condemning abortion. The Holy Cross priest, who was the university provost for a time, wrote and preached on marriage and relationships.

Last month, Burtchaell earned visibility for relationships of his own. Allegations of his sexual misconduct were revealed. It became known that he had been asked to leave Notre Dame for what an official of the Holy Cross order called "the personal tragedy a teacher and scholar brought on himself." Apologies were extended by the official "to those who may have been hurt."

One of the hurt has been heard from. A gay Notre Dame student, writing in the current "Common Sense," a monthly published at the university, tells of placing his trust in Burtchaell as a "spiritual adviser." The priest's idea of advice led, according to the student, to "intimate contact," from naked massages to shared beds. That was in the mid-1980s. The student, now taking graduate courses at the school, reports that in early 1991, "I

discovered that I was almost certainly not the only person Burtchaell had counseled into bed."

By itself, the Notre Dame affair — or affairs — isn't enough to rate more than a momentary "oh my" at one priest's betrayal of trust, or what Burtchaell calls "a default" in his clerical responsibilities. But the Notre Dame case, like Father Bruce Ritter's in 1989, is part of a larger story of sexual abuse of minors by priests that has been slowly making its way, like a procession of shame, out of the rectory onto the front pages.

Led by the National Catholic Reporter, whose persistent and reliable investigative articles throughout the 1980s were early alerts that the church has a major problem, the secular media are now paying attention. The current *Vanity Fair* quotes Jason Berry, author of a coming book on pedophile priests, on the economic costs of litigation, victim compensation and therapy. "Roughly \$300 million has been paid by church officials and insurers since 1985 in cases of priests abusing children and adolescents." In those six years, some 200 cases have been reported to the Vatican embassy in Washington.

These unheavenly revelations have been surfacing at the same time that church leaders — from Pope John Paul II in Rome to Cardinal John O'Connor in New York —

have been using their pulpits to instruct the world on the sinfulness of abortion, contraception and the promiscuity that leads to AIDS. If only a portion of this holy wrath were directed at the church's own sexual disasters, perhaps a few more altar boys or students would have less to fear when Father leaves the sanctuary.

Instead of imposing their moral authority in-house, church officials have been mostly using their ecclesiastical power to evade or cover up the scandals. Whether the problem involves sickness, immorality or crime, leaders in the Catholic hierarchy have yet to formulate a national policy. Only a few bishops and dioceses — the exceptions — have aired the problem publicly. The hierarchy meets annually in Washington to issue papers on war and peace, the economy and why women shouldn't be priests, but so far nothing has come forth on priests and sex offenses.

"The image offered," writes Tom Fox of the National Catholic Reporter, "is that of an institution focused on itself and not on its pastoral mission." The Burtchaell case at Notre Dame is an example of image overcoming responsibility. Early last month, the Holy Cross order declined further comment, an official saying, "We prayerfully seek closure and the healing we hope it will bring

to all affected." A Notre Dame public-relations official denounced the National Catholic Reporter for resorting to "tabloid" journalism in reporting the Burtchaell story. Instead, the official, in a gushing and praising letter to the paper that read as if it were promoting the priest's canonization, extolled Burtchaell for his "uncompromising integrity" and "unremitting devotion to those in need." As a "teacher, a counselor, confessor and an advocate for the voiceless and vulnerable, he has no equals." It sounds like the second coming of Knute Rockne.

Too many children and families have been wounded by sex-abusing priests for the issue to be cleansed by a few sprinkles of holy water statements. Many at Notre Dame are pressing forward — rightly — to hold university officials accountable for Burtchaell's behavior, which allegedly has been known for more than a decade. The student betrayed by the priest demands to know "why they did nothing to stop this misguided man."

Until answers are supplied, at both the university and in all dioceses where charges are brought, the church's teaching and preaching on sexual morality ought to be put on hold.

1992, Washington Post Writers Group

If You're a Nobody

One Witness Is Enough to Convict You

EDITOR'S NOTE: While not a court trial, the outcome of the Clarence Thomas hearings hung crucially on the word of one single accuser. For convicts at a federal prison in Phoenix, the hearings highlighted the contrast between their own convictions, often based on nothing more than the uncorroborated testimony of a single witness, and the presumption of innocence duly accorded a famous judge. PNS commentator Dannie Martin, a former federal prisoner, has written on prison trends for the San Francisco Chronicle, San Diego Reader, Mother Jones magazine.

by Dannie Martin,
PACIFIC NEWS SERVICE

Clarence Thomas won his battle thanks to the presumption of innocence and now sits on the nation's highest court. A lot of convicts are serving 20 years or more on the word of one unsavory stool pigeon.

On its 200th anniversary the Bill of Rights is under siege by politicians seeking to destroy rules of evidence and the rights of convicts to file habeas corpus petitions. But when big wigs like Clarence Thomas are accused of moral or political offenses, they take those rights for granted.

The Clarence Thomas confirmation hearings had every convict in the federal prison at Phoenix glued to a TV set or a walkman radio. But while the rest of the nation

polarized over Anita Hill's charges of sexual harassment, what fascinated us was the spectacle of an honored judge trying to ward off the accusations of a lone accuser and assert his innocence. "I wonder how he feels having his future hinge on the accusations of a single witness?" one prisoner asked.

Twenty-five years ago federal rules of court held that a person could not be convicted on the uncorroborated testimony of an accomplice, and the unsubstantiated testimony of any one witness was viewed with deep suspicion by federal courts and juries.

But three decades of tough-on-crime conspiracy laws and harsh court rules have changed all that. In conspiracy trials, hearsay evidence can now be used to convict. Federal judges nowadays instruct juries that the uncorroborated testimony of an accomplice or even one witness is enough to convict.

Given his limited trial experience as a judge, Clarence Thomas may never have issued those instructions to a jury. As a judge on the appeals court, however, there's no doubt he participated in decisions that upheld the "one witness" reasoning. Yet faced with the charges of one woman who looked entirely credible, Clarence Thomas clearly had no doubts that he himself was entitled to the presumption of innocence.

Prisoners, untutored though they may be in political matters, are extremely sensitized

to the moral high road taken by public figures. When a Clarence Thomas pleads for the benefit of the doubt, or appeals to the 'good ole boys' in the face of damning accusations, convicted criminals are mesmerized.

At one point during the hearings, a prisoner in the yard took off his walkman earphones in disgust. "A guy testified that two years earlier I had sold him a load of crank (methamphetamines). The jury convicted me and the judge gave me twenty years on his sole testimony. Now this fool judge is sitting there shouting that the woman is lying after he's upheld lying stool pigeons

like the one who got me!"

Judge Thomas ended up being confirmed to the Supreme Court in spite of Anita Hill's damning testimony. The lesson for convicts is that if you're rich or famous and get in trouble, you don't have to worry about the new procedures in court. If you're a nobody — with your life and liberty in jeopardy — one witness alone is enough to send you up for a long time.

If there's any cause for hope, it's that the judge owes his position to the public's commitment to the presumption of innocence. That alone could just possibly make him its most ardent advocate.

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Public Is Not Served When Media Act As 'Gatekeepers'

Agran, Other 'Minor' Candidates Shut Out

by Colman McCarthy

WASHINGTON — It looks prim and polite: five Democrats in New Hampshire running for president and coming together for high-minded debates. Tom Brokaw handled the first, Cokie Roberts the second. News pros were matched to political pros. The public was to be well-served.

It wasn't. The public is being manipulated by television executives and Democratic Party officials. Whether by coincidence or conspiracy, they have relegated Larry Agran, Lenora Fulani and Gene McCarthy — to take only three candidates — to the outer circles of attention while reserving the inner circle for Jerry Brown, Bill Clinton, Tom Harkin, Bob Kerrey and Paul Tsongas.

The argument is that the anointed five are major candidates with current or past service in the Senate or statehouse while the unanointed others are irrelevant never-wabees.

Applied to Larry Agran, this dismissal not only ignores his record as the progressive mayor of Irvine, Calif., but it mocks the ethic that the electorate deserves as wide a selection of options as possible.

Agran is not in New Hampshire on a lark, nor is his candidacy a caper. That was proven in the one televised debate he did manage to get onstage, although for a moment it looked as if he were headed for jail. That was in Nashua in December when Sen. Jay Rockefeller presided over a discussion of health care. After Rockefeller mouthed some platitudes on the importance of the discussion, Agran rose from the center of the hall to demand that he be allowed a place on the platform. Rockefeller called on security to oust this disturber of New Hampshire's peace. But the crowd, more enlightened in the ways of free speech than Rockefeller the patrician, protested that Agran had a right to be heard. By popular demand, he went up to take his seat — near a squirming Rockefeller, it turned out — and so did Lenora Fulani, the two of them joining Gene McCarthy and the big fellas. Agran more than held his own.

The sky didn't fall and the oceans didn't rise.

Instead of the New Hampshire primary being a Democrats' free-for-all, it has been a free-for-some. To their discredit, the some — the Favored Five — have lacked the broadness of spirit to protest that Agran should be allowed to debate among them. Their model for narrow-mindedness is Chris Spirou, the New Hampshire Democratic Party chair whose idea of full intellectual exchange occurred in November at a state convention. He shut off Agran's microphone because he was a "minor" candidate.

What's minor about being on the ballot in 27 states — with 23 pending — and raising \$200,000 in 37 states and none of it PAC money? What's minor about having repeatedly won elections for 12 years as a liberal Democrat in conservative Republican Orange County, California?

One reason Agran, an honors graduate

from Harvard Law, is a major candidate is that he is breaking in a major way from the tepid reforms called for by conventional Democrats. Cut the military budget by half, he has proposed. That isn't a wild notion — \$150 billion for the Pentagon is still plenty, with a few billion thrown in for fraud and waste so as to allow defense contractors a gradual and more merciful withdrawal from their addictions.

Agran isn't a tame-the-Pentagon Democrat because he reads *The Progressive* or *The Nation* too much. It's worse than that: He's been a mayor, the one political job in America that sees the devastations to families, schools and neighborhoods caused by squandering our wealth for military adventurism and defense fantasies. Mayors, much more than senators or governors, see the mounting hu-

man pain caused by the pro-military money hemorrhage of the past three decades. Why, Agran is asking, "must the average American family be taxed \$2,000 a year to pick up the tab for European and Japanese security? Isn't it time for the Europeans and the Japanese to pay *all* the costs — whatever they are — to defend their own citizens?...Meanwhile, our government should get on with the business of defending the interests of American citizens in Seattle and Birmingham, in Manchester and New York...."

Agran represents the voice of local government. Maybe he is qualified for the presidency, maybe not, which can also be said of the others now in New Hampshire. His experience has been traditionally Democratic — in city hall delivering the services. His popularity in Nixon-Reagan country suggests his

deliveries have been efficient. Agran's own party refuses to hear him, with much of the media plugging their ears also.

Candidates for the Jan. 31 debate have been invited by producers of the PBS "MacNeil/Lehrer News Hour." But Agran hasn't been invited, even though last September a senior producer wrote an admiring letter to tell him that, following a Roger Mudd interview in August, the program took pride in "not being 'gatekeepers' deciding who was a 'legitimate candidate' and who was not." If they took pride then, they should be ashamed now. Among the bosses — party and news — it has been decided arbitrarily that Agran is a loser. The larger loss is the public's.

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Despite New Evidence of Innocence, Thomas Voted to Execute

EDITOR'S NOTE: In his first substantive action on the Supreme Court, Clarence Thomas voted to overrule a panel of conservative judges and allow Texas to execute an arguably innocent man. In so doing he showed his unabashed eagerness to join the radical right wing of the court at the expense of due process guarantees in death penalty cases. PNS commentator Michael Kroll, who writes widely on capital punishment cases, directs the Washington D.C. based Death Penalty Information Center.

*Copyright 1991, Pacific News Service
by Michael Kroll,*

For those who hoped that Clarence Thomas' bitter confirmation experience would foster a new found deference to due process, his first substantive vote as an Associate Justice of the United States Supreme Court is profoundly disappointing. Perhaps because the vote occurred in the dead of night, it has gone little noted in the media.

Just past midnight on the morning of November 20, Texas' officials were gearing up to carry out their 43rd execution since the Supreme Court gave its sanction to the modern death penalty in 1976. Justin Lee May, 44, a brain-damaged and mentally impaired white man convicted of shooting to death a white woman in the course of a robbery, would be strapped to the gurney some time before midnight and prepped for the lethal injection that would follow.

The crime, which occurred in 1978, went unsolved for five years. Then, in 1983, police arrested Justin May and Richard Miles for the murder. Miles, who owned the murder weapon, was offered and accepted a deal with the prosecutor: in exchange for his testimony pointing the finger at May, he was allowed to plead guilty to a lesser, noncapital offense.

On the basis of Miles' testimony, May

was convicted and sentenced to death. And then, four days before the scheduled execution, Miles recanted his testimony. In a sworn affidavit, he asserted that while he himself had participated in the offense, Justin Lee May had not. In fact, May had not even been present.

"I have never revealed these facts to anyone before now," Miles stated. "Before the trial...I was afraid that if I didn't point the finger at May, they (the police) would pin me on capital murder and I would be executed... That is what Captain Wagner told me, and I believed him... Even now, I am afraid the police...will come after me and find some way to have me locked up again... But my conscience is eating me and it's time to tell the truth regardless of what may happen to me."

Lawyers for Justin May immediately filed papers in federal court in a desperate race against the clock to get the execution stayed. With fewer than three hours to go, the U.S. Court of Appeals in the Fifth Circuit — perhaps the most conservative appeals court in the country — granted the motion. What they needed was time, they said, to consider the disturbing new evidence that Texas was about to execute an innocent man.

As has now become routine in such circumstances, Texas' officials worked feverishly to have the stay of execution lifted before the death warrant expired — and before any court might have time to deliberate on the merits of May's new claim. The U.S. Supreme Court was summoned into action.

At five minutes before midnight, the high court voted to sustain the decision of the appeals court halting the execution. Only three justices voted to overrule the lower court and allow the state to kill Mr. May even in the face of his now-supported claim of innocence. Two of those votes were not a surprise to anyone who follows death pen-

alty litigation: Chief Justice William Rehnquist and Associate Justice Antonin Scalia, the most doctrinaire of the court's conservatives.

But the third justice, Clarence Thomas, was a surprise to many. During his confirmation hearings in the Senate Judiciary Committee in the fall, Thomas had been asked about his views on capital punishment. Unlike his reticence to express any opinion about abortion, Thomas did not hesitate to endorse the death penalty, despite his lack of any professional experience with death penalty case. Yet, he quickly added a caveat: he was concerned, he told his Senate inquisitors, that death penalty cases not be the vehicle for trimming away protections only Due Process of Law guarantees, a trend already well underway on the Court.

Politically, it was an expedient expression of concern. It pacified many in and out of Congress concerned about the elevation of process over substance in recent Supreme Court decisions. It held out the promise that the newest member of the Court might be an independent thinker after all, might surprise and disappoint his political backers.

By voting to overrule a panel of conservative judges and allow Texas to execute an arguably innocent man, Thomas has provided powerful evidence of the emptiness of that promise and his unabashed eagerness to join the radical right wing of the court.

"Assert your right to know; support the alternative press."

—Maggie Kuhn,
Gray Panthers

A Critical Look at the School Choice Movement

by Anthony A. Parker

School choice is a chimera. Its advocates say it will jump-start America's beleaguered public school system by rewarding good schools and punishing bad ones. But its critics contend that it has a more dangerous side. They say it discriminates against the racially and economically disadvantaged students who populate the nation's "bad" schools.

No one doubts that America's public schools are in trouble. Public education should be an effective tool for achieving social and economic progress and equality. Instead, public education in the United States ill prepares graduates for meaningful work and reinforces social and economic inequities. Socio-economic status frequently limits access to "quality" education. During the last 40 years, education reformers have attempted to improve access to quality education across racial and class lines. Some reformers hope school choice will bring us closer to this laudable goal.

School choice does have its share of conservative advocates and liberal opponents. Conservatives argue that marketstyle competition offers the best remedy for costly, ineffective public education. It will force bad school systems to shape up, their logic goes, by making them pay to send some of their students to "good" schools. Progressive critics of choice cry foul, on the grounds that too many students — usually poorer students — get left behind. The scenario, they argue, encourages separate-and-unequal education.

Choice plans frequently demonstrate a subtle bias against poorer families. If you can't afford the transportation and incidental costs of sending your child to a school outside your district, then you won't benefit from most subsidized choice programs. In fact, school choice can mean that your child's already inadequate school will be gutted by diverting your town's tax dollars to another school system.

This leaves advocates of equitable, quality education in a conundrum. Today's system doesn't work, and parents—including minority, poor, and working-class parents—are anxiously considering all alternatives. But creating an educational free market seems an unattractive alternative. Deborah Meier, a noted East Harlem education, reflected the quandary when she wrote in *The Nation*: "[C]hoice is necessary but not sufficient. [I]f choice] worked for most students, we'd put up with it, but it doesn't."

The racial roots of school choice

Choice became an issue in education during the desegregation battles of the 1950s, 1960s and 1970s. Before the Supreme Court's 1954 *Brown v. Board of Education* decisions outlawed segregation in public schools, blacks attended inferior, underfunded schools and used outdated textbooks. Civil rights advocates envisioned desegregation as a strategy for expanding access to higher quality education. For blacks, a desire for choice motivated the fight for desegrega-

tion: They wanted the ability to move through all areas of society without hindrance from racism.

Unfortunately, most whites confused desegregation with social integration. School committees and courts closed black schools in black neighborhoods; black teachers, principals, and other officials were either fired or transferred into white schools and demoted. Black children had to attend schools in white neighborhoods, where they lacked cultural support and the mechanisms to address the deficiencies in their earlier education. Blacks began to consider alternative forms of choice that would allow them to preserve their cultural identity and strengthen their community ties.

The easy response to school choice would be to reject it, but this response is inadequate.

During this same period, whites reacted against desegregation. They used the rhetoric of "choice" to resist court-ordered desegregation. As which parents took their children out of public schools and put them into private ones, Republican politicians launched efforts to give these parents financial redress. Arguing that parents of private-school students should not have to pay taxes to support public schools, these politicians proposed a system of vouchers, through which a child's municipality would pay his or her private-school tuition. In this context, school choice emerged as a white response to desegregation.

But the white response also got rethinking started in many black communities. Joan Ratteray of the Institute for Independent Schools, a Washington-based organization representing alternative black schools, says, "It set the political context for raising the question of what was being done with tax money."

Many black educators now argue that school desegregation never offered a strategy for improving public schools. Others say it simply did not work for the majority of black school children. Desegregation, black critics argue, failed to consider housing patterns, racist political entrenchment, and the negative impact of Eurocentric curriculums on black children. During the 1980s, many black parents and educators came to see the need for a variation of school choice: They wanted the opportunity to see their children in schools that meet their educational and cultural needs.

By any means necessary

Wisconsin recently enacted a unique school choice program backed by an unlikely coalition of inner-city blacks and white conservatives—despite opposition from civil

rights groups, teachers' unions and liberal activists. The state of Milwaukee's decaying public schools helps explain black support for school choice. Fifteen percent of all students drop out of Milwaukee's public high schools. Black and Hispanic students drop out most frequently and score lower than their white counterparts on standardized tests. Blacks average a score of 24% on reading tests, whites 56%. These results come at a high cost. The city spends \$6,000 per student, on education each year.

"Why do we tolerate this?" asks Wisconsin State Representative Annette Polly Williams, a former welfare recipient and mother of four Milwaukee Public School (MPS) graduates. "Most people would complain angrily if they bought a car and it was a lemon. They would demand the car be repaired or that they get a refund. We take lemons from the public school system when we never do that with any other product we pay for." Fearing that poor schools will create a "permanent" underclass, Williams proposed having the state pay private schools \$2,500 per poor student enrolled from the MPS. She says, "I'm trying to take what the system offers middle-class white people—choice—and make it work for low-income minorities."

Implemented before the 1990-1991 school year, the Milwaukee Parental Choice Program enables one percent of MPS's 100,000 students to attend private school. Eligibility requirements stipulate that the income of a participating student's family cannot exceed 1.75 times the federal poverty level.

During the program's first year, the Harambee School Development Corporation, an alternative black private school, enrolled 90 MPS students in grades three through eight. It costs \$3,000 annually to educate a child at Harambee. This covers tuition, books, snacks, utilities and teacher salaries. On top of the state's \$2,500, Harambee must kick in \$500 per choice child. The school covers this cost through grants and contributions.

Harambee Principal Dennis Alexander views his school and the choice program as resources for poor children. "People may have a misconception of what type of student Harambee, or any other choice school, caters to," he says. "Many of our students are below the poverty level, some are on AFDC (Aid to Families with Dependent Children)." Although Alexander wants more schools and students brought into the program. "We pay more attention to the needs and personal problems of children. If we continue to allow our children to receive an inferior education, they will go to the streets."

Despite its orientation towards disadvantaged students, Wisconsin's program has attracted opposition from liberal and progressive groups like the NAACP, the ACLU, the Wisconsin Education Association Council, and the Milwaukee school board. The program has already survived two court suits brought by these groups.

"We are opposed to using public funds to

finance private education," says Dick Collins, president of the Wisconsin Education Association, a 63,000 member teachers union. "The Milwaukee plan is not a level playing field." According to Collins, private school teachers do not need certification, and private schools do not have to accept handicapped or special-needs students and can expel students almost at will. "The plan is a fraud on taxpayers," Collin asserts. "We're sending public dollars to private schools but with no measure of accountability from these schools."

The inequalities of choice

Since Minnesota launched the first public-funded choice program in the mid-1980s, 21 other states have created programs including some form of choice. Massachusetts' new program is more typical of these than Wisconsin's. This state wide program provides couchers for students leaving one public school district for another. The Bay State plan has glaring inequities, which illustrate the dangers of a poorly designed program.

Under the current law, a choice student's home school district pays the total costs of the child's education even if he attends a school in a wealthier community. The current law does not provide for transportation costs. Nor does it offer parents an easy way to learn their options.

The Massachusetts choice system is biased against poorer communities. "Under the current law, choice is destroying and plundering school districts," says State Senator Arthur Chase, a Republican who represents Worcester, the state's second largest city. "Poorly conceived bills of this nature will destroy any real choice children have."

According to statistics compiled by Chase's office, 35% of the students and 38% of choice expenses come from four working class or mixed-income communities. Brockton offers the most glaring example of choice's downside. This blue-collar city — best known for producing boxing champions Rocky Marciano and Marvin Hagler — is nearly bankrupt. Its 15,000 students attend classes where the average student-teacher ratio is 35:1. Only 109 students are enrolled in the choice program, they attend school in neighboring Avon. On average, these students come from more affluent families than their former classmates. Twenty-four percent of Brockton's student population is AFDC eligible. Only 4% of the choice students are. Sending 109 students to school in Avon costs Brockton \$900,000. While Brockton spends approximately \$4,600 per students educated in its high school, it must pay Avon \$10,200 per high school student. For every two students it sends to Avon, Brockton will lose one teacher.

In an attempt to address these problems, Chase has offered an alternative choice bill. He proposes setting a uniform tuition rate for choice students at 80% of average statewide

Continued on following page

The Savage Inequities of Public School Education

Savage Inequalities

By Jonathan Kozol
Crown Publishers
New York, 1991
\$20, 288pp.

By Doug Gills
Insight Features

Jonathan Kozol's 'Savage Inequalities' dramatically depicts the reality of education for poor children. The author takes the reader on a graphic tour of inner-city schools and suburban schools, schools for the rich and schools for the poor.

Kozol makes a compelling argument that contemporary school finance policies have resulted in public schools more segregated by race and class, and less equal in results, than they were at the time of the 'Brown vs Board of Education' Supreme Court decision in 1954. In fact, says Kozol, we haven't even achieved the "separate but equal" standard of *Plessy vs Ferguson* in 1896.

Kozol takes the reader to DuSable High School on Chicago's South Side and Winnetka's New Trier High School. The former has some of the poorest children in the country, while the latter has some of the wealthiest. And the differences in the facilities and educational opportunities matches the disparities in income.

Why do these disparities exist? What are the sources of the inequity? Kozol points out that the real estate property tax, coupled with varying state contributions, is at the core of the equity crisis. Rich districts with large tax bases, even with low tax rates, can generate more revenue than many poorer districts. Poor communities like East St. Louis, even with the highest tax rates on property, cannot generate enough income to adequately support educational programs at the level of needs of their students.

Kozol hammers on the theme that U.S. policymakers—supported by popular indifference or ignorance — have misdirected priorities. They prefer military contracts and bailouts for scam-ridden financial institutions over social investment in human resource development. Kozol dramatizes how the process of brutalization leads to criminalization of increasing numbers of inner-city youth. Public schools manufacture failure in a socio-political environment where there is no longer a moral imperative for adequate educational support. Kozol identifies the inequities as not rooted in cultural differences but in resource allocations that have a racial character but are essentially class-based.

Kozol's apparent audience includes professionals, college-trained opinion shapers, and a new generation of college youth open to progressive ideas. The question is whether the equity issue can be addressed via moral appeals to enlightened conscience alone. Such pleas have yet to resolve the housing, hunger and health care problems faced by the poor.

The educational system which generates unequal access, opportunities and results in achievement and performance along class and race lines is morally indefensible. We should all protest in righteous indignation. But convincing the ruling elites and public managers through moral appeals about educational fairness and justice will not, even if necessary, produce the desired political results.

Why? U.S. public education is inextricably linked to the political economy. It parallels the historical development of the economy and broader U.S. social formation. It has facilitated values and outcomes favorable to the reproduction of the prevailing structure of social relations.

Working people who came to industrial centers like Chicago over the past 70 to 100 years benefitted from industrial-based expansion and the expansion of democracy. For their children and grandchildren, completing public school once virtually guaranteed upward social mobility, at least through the 1960s. Each generation of urban families, Blacks as well as European immigrants, placed high value on advancement through education as a ticket to improved life chances.

But in the post-industrial period, completion of high school does not assure social mobility. 'Savage Inequalities,' with Kozol's other works, leaves the impression that schools are part of a screening system to disqualify aspirants into the mainstream. Such a process becomes all the more pertinent under conditions of more intense competition for scarce job opportunities.

Technological innovations such as personal computers, word processors and voice mail mean that many activities once performed by clerks are now incorporated into modern management and professional activities. The consequences of these dynamics are only just beginning to be understood. Meanwhile, the cost of advanced education has soared, while larger segments of the population are marginalized. In the face of such changes in the work place, education must be popularly redefined.

We should note several trends in the re-thinking of public education: abandonment of inner-city schools by the middle class via privatization, leading to a demand for vouchers; a conservative reaction to the increasingly high real estate property taxes as the primary source of school revenue, coupled with the demand for substitution of a progressive income tax base; and the conservative view that public education is no longer to be viewed as a right, but an opportunity

determined by merit.

Kozol points out the need for raising revenue by means other than property tax. I concur. In Illinois, the state's share of total public education expenditures has declined from 44 percent to under 37 percent since 1983. While the percentage of income-eligible students in Chicago schools has risen to 80% of the state total, Chicago only receives funding under the state school aid formula for 23 percent of eligible students. Hence it loses \$330 million per year due to the underfunding of the school aid system.

At the federal level, the president proposes to use existing entitlement funds for low-income students to fund a federal voucher system, to establish special congressional district model schools, and to provide pilot tax credits for families who have opted out of the public schools. Finally, at the local level, Chicago's Daley administration is talking about vouchers.

These voucher-choice plans will cripple the public school system without providing poor kids with quality education. It is clear, then, that the current direction of public policy-making is toward dismantling of public education.

It is not the moral will of the country's leadership alone that is the key to this crisis. It is the absence of the political will to adequately fund the public schools and provide democratic access to public education. Such political will is not likely to be developed in the absence of a broad social movement to demand that education be elevated in priority on the public agenda, along with all the other crucial issues effecting the nation's urban centers.

Doug Gills is a community organizer working with the Kenwood-Oakland Community Organization on Chicago's South Side.

Supply Siders Should Encourage School Activists to Recast Debate

Continued from previous page

costs, instead of the current 100% of the average costs of the receiving school. Under the Chase bill, the state would pay 75% of these costs and the sending school the remaining 25%. The bill would also require the receiving school to pay transportation costs for kids in kindergarten through sixth grade and improve information and regulation.

Supply-side education

The Massachusetts case reflects poorly on the conservative argument that offers choice as a way to empower families of all income levels, by giving them the opportunity to make critical educational choices. But conservatives are not about to give up on choice. Conservative reasoning suggests that market forces and competition should determine how public education is provided. Their thinking challenges the

logic of a public educational monopoly. They blame the current state of U.S. education on the public sector, arguing that in the absence of market incentives, the public sector has been unable to provide a quality product.

But progressives say the marketplace is flawed for at least three reasons: not everyone can choose where they attend school, school choice does not solve the problem of inferior education, and the marketplace discriminates. "A market system of education is merely an extension of deregulation that promises to compound social inequities," argues Robert Lowe, co-editor of *Rethinking Schools*. "The consequences will be a more drastic maldistribution of opportunity than exists today."

In essence, school choice boils down to creating alternatives to decaying public schools without addressing the root causes of that decay. It offers hope to parents who can get their children into choice programs —

either by good fortune or economic status — but no benefits to the children left in the poorer schools. And as Lowe accurately observes, real school reform — what is needed to improve all schools — has traditionally come through government intervention, not through the marketplace.

The current "crisis" in public education owes to broader changes in American society. Public education in the United States has functioned as a training ground for participation in society's political and economic institutions. But the education system has not kept pace with the dramatic changes these institutions have undergone during the past century. The curriculum and structure of public schools continues to assume an industrial economy run by executives, middle-level managers, and skilled and unskilled laborers. And it continues to be based on the needs of a largely white population.

The easy response to school choice would

be to reject it, but this response is inadequate. Choice has proven to be attractive to parts of the left's constituency, and a well-designed program can partially answer particular problems within the education system. More broadly, activists need to recast the debate about why schools are failing — taking into consideration the role of the education system in a changing political and economic context and the costs of generalized quality education — to propose ways in which all our schools can be improved.

Resources: *Rethinking Schools*, 1001 East Keefe Ave., Milwaukee, WI 53212

Dollars and Sense is a monthly progressive economic magazine. First year subscriptions cost \$16.95, and may be ordered by writing *Dollars and Sense*, 1 Summer Street, Somerville, MD 02143

Wind

Continued from page 1

ment. There is no such commitment in Nebraska. Although OPPD operates under the umbrella goal of "least-cost planning" which includes not only utility costs, but also "societal costs for environmental preservation," they do not quantify such costs. Mark Gautier says that phrase means they do "whatever we're required to do by the Clean Air Act." Coal is the primary energy source for OPPD now, with nuclear power second.

Coal is a major contributor of CO₂ to the atmosphere, causing global warming. Coal also gives off most of the major greenhouse gases.

Energy planners all agree that a mix of options is important. All fuels are subject to price fluctuations; it is conceivable that something could happen to make it impossible to use coal at all (such as a serious environmental crisis.) The sooner a utility learns how to utilize another clean option, the more securely it will face the future.

Marvin pointed out other important features of wind power.

One is the way it utilizes land. Since there has to be space between turbines, wind farms are very compatible with farming, he said, adding that it occupies about five percent of a tract of land. Additionally, the wind farm brings income to the farmer, \$200 to \$400 per acre per year, and adds value to the land. Grazing land east of Oakland, Calif., has appreciated by \$2,000/acre due to the addition of the windfarms.

Then there are jobs. According to Marvin, the wind energy industry creates five times as many jobs as the coal industry, and the jobs are good quality and targeted to rural people.

Finally, Marvin raised the issue of the international market. Fossil fuels will run out and greater reliance on renewable energy is inevitable. The question is, who will understand the technology and market the turbines. "Will Americans have to buy wind generators from the Japanese?" Marvin asks.

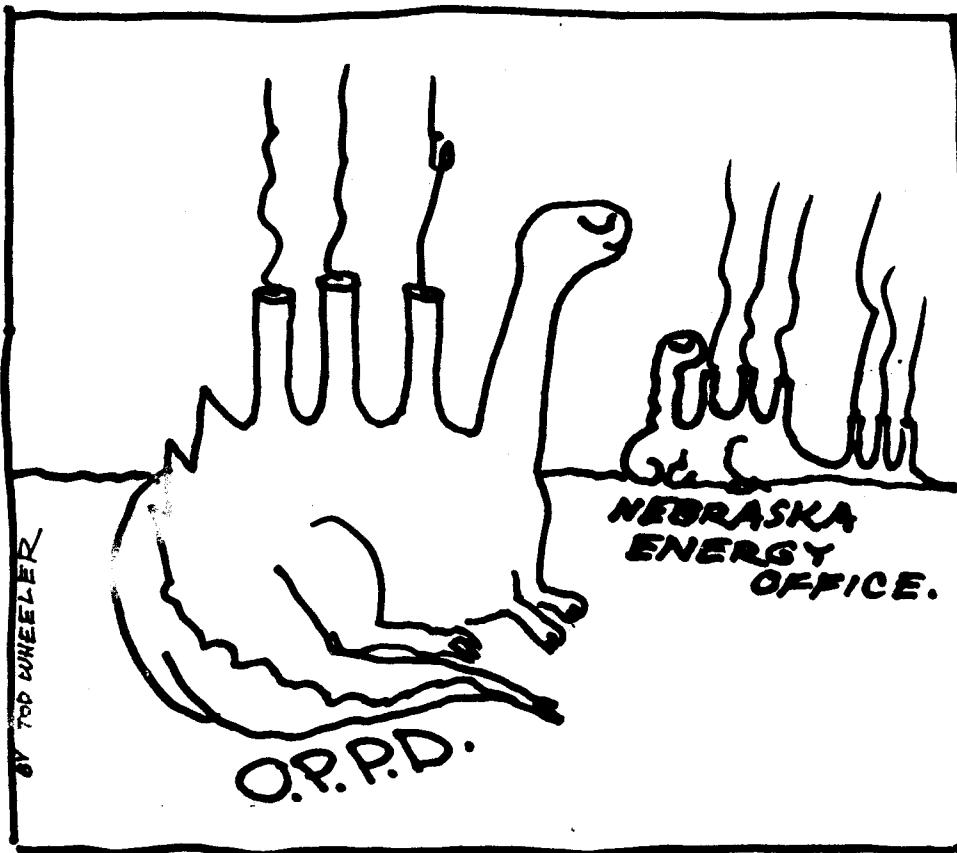
He said that the two most recent entrants into the market were Sumitomo Industries and Mitsubishi Heavy Industries. In Europe as well, the industry is exploding.

The same argument could be made to enter the market for photovoltaic (PV) energy, although it is not yet cost competitive with most urban sources. We suspect, however, that there are many situations, such as the need to provide water pumps for livestock, where because of the necessity for running long lines, PV cells could compete. The other important consideration for PV technology is that it is an economy of scale. It has dropped by one-third in price in the last ten years, and will continue to drop as more people use it. The use of PV by a public utility -- even in limited "niche" applications as described above -- would create a new market and have much more impact on the future viability of the technology than individuals ever could.

In last month's Observer, we reported that state energy officials had adopted Demand-Side Management into their energy planning, allowing them to defer construction of new equipment. At OPPD that will mean that no capital intensive projects will be undertaken until 1995, when they plan to begin bringing eight gas-fueled combustion turbines on line. After that, in 2005 they plan to add another coal-burning plant in Nebraska City. In 2008 the license expires for the Fort Calhoun nuclear plant.

In the Observer's opinion, they should be doing all they can as soon as possible to forestall the need for that new construction by learning how to make the best use of our wind resources.

OPPD's Mark Goutier says the company's policy is not set in stone. "While it's not cost economic now, if there are changes in technology, or if costs increase affect our options and it becomes competitive, we'll look hard at it."



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Three of Ten on Gulf War

1991's Most 'Censored' News Stories...

Project Censored, a national media research effort now in its 16th year, locates stories about significant issues which are not widely publicized by the national news media. Following are the top ten under-reported stories of 1991:

1

UNCENSORED IRAQ COVERAGE SPIKED BY NETWORKS

CBS and NBC rejected professional video tape footage taken at the height of the air war in Iraq by two Emmy-award-winning documentary producers. The footage substantially contradicted U.S. administration claims that civilian damage from the American-led bombing campaign was light.

2

OPERATION CENSORED WAR

The Gulf War set new, questionable standards for wartime secrecy. Many important stories, which the public had a right to know, are still not being reported by the major media. It took a freelance journalist, posing as a mortician, to get a more accurate estimate of battlefield casualties from the Dover AFB mortuary, the only one handling Desert Storm casualties.

3

VOODOO ECONOMICS

The media failed to explain how bad the national deficit was and why the economy went into a tailspin in 1991. The interest alone on the federal debt will be the nation's single largest expenditure this year, exceeding even the military budget.

4

THE \$250 BILLION POLITICAL COVER-UP

An hour-long television documentary, produced by PBS Frontline and the San Francisco-based Center for Investigative Reporting, revealed the truth about the extent of the savings and loan scandal and how it was covered-up so that it would not threaten George Bush's candidacy in 1988.

5

DoD'S UNTOLD SCANDAL

A Justice Department investigation into possible fraud and bribery in securing defense contracts could equal or exceed the "Teapot Dome" scandal or the publication of the Pentagon Papers in its scope but we may never know. Search warrants and affidavits that certain transcripts of wiretapped con-

versations of employees with a major defense contractor have now been sealed by court order.

6

NO IRAQI THREAT TO SAUDI ARABIA?

Satellite photos of Iraq and Kuwait on September 11, 1990, revealed no evidence of a massive Iraqi army threat to Saudi Arabia as cited by President George Bush that same day in his efforts to rally public support for the Gulf War.

7

FOIA IS AN OXYMORON

The erosion, and possible obsolescence, of the Freedom of Information Act over the past ten years coincides with a new and particularly hostile attitude towards the public's right to know which has characterized the Reagan-Bush administration.

8

CORPORATE AMERICA'S ANTI-ENVIRONMENTAL CAMPAIGN

Recent corporate anti-environmental innovations include multi-million dollar SLAPP suits, the harassment and surveillance of activists, the infiltration of environmental groups by "agent provocateurs," and the creation of dummy ecology groups to locate whistleblowers.

9

THE INSLAW SOFTWARE THEFT

In a little-publicized but potentially explosive legal battle, the Inslaw Corporation charges that the U.S. Department of Justice robbed it of its case-management and criminal-tracking software program, conspired to send the company into bankruptcy, and then initiated a cover-up.

10

THE BUSH FAMILY'S CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

In recent history, no president has had the blatant but unexplored familial conflicts of interest comparable to that of George Bush. These include his brother, Prescott, a financial consultant with influential contacts in Japan, South Korea, and the Philippines; his sons: Neil, a former director of Silverado Savings and Loan whose failure cost taxpayers about \$1 billion; Jeb, a Miami real estate developer with questionable ties to a drug trafficker; and George W., a director and consultant to Harken Energy Corporation which has a lucrative oil-production agree-

ment with Bahrain, a tiny island off the coast of Saudi Arabia.

The Other 15 'Censored' Stories

The other 15 under-reported stories of 1991 were: The Strange Death of Danny Casolario; Dan Quayle: Lobbyist for Big Business; FinCEN: A Threat to Privacy and Property; The Failure of Congressional Oversight; The Untold October Surprise Story; The Specter of Environmental Racism; Inside Bohemian Grove: The Story People Magazine Censored; Federal Seizure Laws: Making Crime Pay; The Rejected Syrian Hostage Offer; Judicial Manipulation of the Agent Orange Case; EPA Fails to Pursue Fraud and Abuse; Public Health Service Takes a New Look at the Fluoridation Issue; Congressional Intelligence Oversight Law is Meaningless; The Canned Hunt: Killing Captive Animals for Sport; Toxic PCB Contamination Above the Arctic Circle.

Project Censored Judges

The panel of judges who selected the top ten under-reported news stories were Dr. Donna Allen, founding editor of *Media Report to Women*; Ben Bagdikian, Professor

Emeritus, Graduate School of Journalism, University of California at Berkeley; Richard Barnet, Senior Fellow, Institute for Policy Studies; Noam Chomsky, professor, Linguistics and Philosophy, Massachusetts Institute of Technology; Dr. George Gerbner, professor, Annenberg School of Communications, University of Pennsylvania;

Nicholas Johnson, professor, College of Law, University of Iowa; Rhoda H. Karpatkin, executive director, Consumer Union; Charles L. Klotzer, editor and publisher, *St. Louis Journalism Review*; Judith Krug, director, Office for Intellectual Freedom, American Library Association; Frances Moore Lappé, co-founder and co-director, Institute for the Arts of Democracy; William Lutz, professor of English, Rutgers University, and editor of *The Quarterly Review of Doublespeak*;

Robert C. Maynard, editor and publisher, *Oakland Tribune*; Jack L. Nelson, professor, Graduate School of Education, Rutgers University; Tom Peters, nationally syndicated columnist on excellence; Herbert I. Schiller, Professor Emeritus of Communication, University of California at San Diego; and Sheila Rabb Weidenfeld, president, D.C. Productions.

...And Who Exposed Them

ducer for *Frontline*.

5. DoD's Untold Scandal. *Common Cause Magazine* Nov/Dec 1990, "The Devil and Mr. Jones," by John Hanrahan; *The St. Louis Journalism Review*, March 1991, "The documents were sealed and the public shut out," by Philip Dunn.

6. No Iraqi Threat. *In These Times*, 2/27/91, "Public doesn't get picture with Gulf satellite photos," by Jean Heller, (reprinted from *St. Petersburg (Fla.) Times*, 1/6/91).

7. FOIA Is an Oxymoron. *Common Cause*, July/Aug 1991, "The Fight To Know," by Peter Montgomery and Peter Overby.

8. Corporate Anti-Environment Campaign. *EMagazine*, Nov/Dec 1991, "Stop the Greens," by Eve Pell; *Greenpeace News*, 5/10/91, Washington, D.C.

9. Inslaw Software Theft. *In These Times*, 5/29-6/11/91, "Software Pirates," by Joel Bleifuss; *Random Lengths*, 10/3-16/91, "Software to Die For," by James Ridgeway.

10. Bush Family's Conflicts of Interest. *San Francisco Examiner*, 7/28/91, "Crime-linked firms hired Prescott Bush;" *Santa Rosa Press-Democrat*, 7/19/91, "Neil Bush's new boss....," and "8/16/91, "Son's S&L not closed...;" *SPIN*, 12/3/91, "See No Evil," by Jefferson Morley; *The Texas Observer*, 7/12/91, "Oil in the Family," and 9/20/91, "Global Entanglements," both by David Armstrong.

art exhibits

Area Gallery Listings**Anderson O'Brien Gallery**
8724 Pacific St., Omaha.**Through Sat., Feb. 1st**-Lindy Lyman,
"Transformations."**Adam Whitney Gallery**
8725 Shamrock Rd., Omaha.
393-1051

Hours: 10-5 Monday through Saturday

Antiquarium Gallery
1215 Harney St., Omaha.
341-8077**Through Feb. 7th**-Tony McMillan,
Paintings. Brad Barber, photographs.**Artists' Cooperative Gallery**
405 S. 11th St., Omaha.
342-9617Hours: Wed. & Thurs. 11 a.m.-5 p.m.; Fri.
& Sat. 11 a.m.-10 p.m.; Sun. noon-5 p.m.**Through March 1st**-Works by Bill
Steavenson and Jim Williams.**Bellevue College Gallery**
Galvin Rd. at Harvell Dr., Bellevue.
292-3732Hours: 8 a.m.-10 p.m. Mon.-Fri.; 9 a.m.-5
p.m. Sat.; 1-5 p.m. Sun.**Bemis New Gallery**
614 S. 11th, Omaha.
341-7130**Through March 1st**-St. Wojciech
Pakowski, etchings and paintings; Yun-
Dong Nam, sculptures.**Burkholder Project**
719 "P" St., Lincoln.
477-3305

Hours: 10-5 p.m. Mon.-Sat.

Cathedral Arts ProjectSt. Cecilia's Cathedral, 701 N. 40th St.,
Omaha.

558-3100

Hours: 1-3:30 p.m. Thurs.-Sun. and by
appointment.**Council Bluffs Artist's Loft**407 W. Broadway, Council Bluffs.
Hours: 10 a.m.-5 p.m. Mon.-Fri.; noon-4
p.m. Sat.**Creighton Fine Arts Gallery**Creighton University
27th and California, Omaha.
280-2509Hours: 10 a.m.-4 p.m. Mon.-Sat.; noon-4
p.m. Sun.**Through Feb. 29th**-African and Pre-
Columbian artworks. <EC>Dana College's
Parnassus Gallery

Blair, NE

Through March 13th-"A Sabbatical
Retrospective Exhibit: Milt Heinrich."**Eyesound Gallery**109 N. 50th, Omaha.
553-4432

Hours: 10 a.m.-5 p.m. Mon.-Sat.

Gallery 722709 Leavenworth, Omaha.
345-3347**Fremont Art Association
Gallery**92 W Sixth St., Fremont, NE
Feb. 1st through Feb. 23rd-Works by
Lauren Weisberg-Norris and Marlene
Mosher.**Gallery 72**2709 Leavenworth St.
345-3347.**Through Feb. 16th**-Cheryl Wall, acrylics
and watercolors.**Garden of the Zodiac**Old Market Passageway, 1042 Howard,
Omaha.

341-1877.

Through Feb. 9th-Works by Cynthia and
Susan Schonlau.**Haydon Gallery**335 N. 8th, Hardy Building, Lincoln.
475-5421

Hours: 10 a.m.-5 p.m. Mon.-Sat.

Through Sat., Feb 1st-Carol Rustad,
"Nebraska Wildflowers."**Haymarket Art Gallery**119 S. 9th St., Lincoln.
475-1061

Hours: 10 a.m.-5 p.m. Tues.-Sat.

Hillmer Art GalleryCollege of St. Mary, 1901 S. 72nd St.,
Omaha.

399-2621

Hours: 1 p.m.-5 p.m. daily, except Fri.

**Iowa Western Community
College Fine Arts Gallery**2700 College Rd. Council Bluffs.
325-3352**Jewish Community Center**

333 S. 132nd St., Omaha.

334-8200

Hours: 8 a.m.-10 p.m. Mon.-Thurs.; 8
a.m.-5 p.m. Fri.;

1 p.m.-7 p.m. Sat.; 1 p.m.-7 p.m. Sun.

Joslyn Art Museum

2200 Dodge, Omaha.

342-3300

Hours: 10 a.m.-5 p.m. Tues. & Wed., Fri.
& Sat.; 10 a.m.-9 p.m. Thurs.; 1 p.m.-7
p.m. Sun.**Through April 5th**-"Edward S. Curtis"
and "Points of View."**Through May 17th**-"John David Brin,
Sculptor."**Through May 31st**-American Indian art
from the permanent collection.**Local Artists' Exchange**Standard Blue, 1415 Harney, Omaha.
Hours: 8 a.m.-5 p.m. Mon.-Fri.; noon-4
p.m. Sat. & Sun.**Metro Arts ArtSpace**601 S. 16th St., Omaha.
341-7910Hours: 9 a.m.-4 p.m. Mon.-Fri. or by
appointment.**Museum of Nebraska Art**24th & Central Ave., Kearney.
(308) 234-8559

Hours: 1 p.m.-5 p.m. Tues.-Sat.

Through March 6th-Prairie Lights Arts
Showcase.**Nebraska Wesleyan University**Elder Gallery, Rogers Center for Fine Arts,
50th & Huntington Ave., Lincoln.**Through Feb. 11th**-art faculty show.**Passageway Gallery**417 S. 11th St. Omaha.
341-1910Hours: 11 a.m.-5 p.m. Mon.-Wed.; 11
a.m.-9 p.m. Thurs.; 11 a.m.-10 p.m. Fri.
& Sat.; or by appointment anytime.**Photographer's Gallery, Inc.**115 N. Washington, Papillion, NE.
331-5710Hours: 10 a.m.-2 p.m. Mon.-Fri.; 1 p.m.-5
p.m. Sun.; closed Sat.; or by appointment
anytime.**Through Feb. 14th**-Works by Richard
Flamer and Reuters Chief of Photo
Operations in El Salvador, Corrine Dufka.**Peru State College**

Jindra Fine Arts Center, Peru, NE

Through Feb. 17th-James Eisentrager,
drawings and paintings.**Sheldon Memorial Art Gallery**12th & "R" Sts., UNL Campus, Lincoln.
472-2461Hours: Tues. & Wed. 10 a.m.-5 p.m.; Sun.
2 p.m.-9 p.m.; Thurs.-Sat. 10 a.m.-5 p.m.;
closed Mon.**Through Feb. 2nd**-student show.**Through Feb. 23rd**-"Sheldon Solo;
Michael Heizer."**Through April 5th**-"A Personal Geom-

etry: Paintings by Martha Horvay."

Through April 19th-"Sheldon Solo: Juan
Hamilton."**13th St. Gallery**

1264 S. 13th St., Omaha.

Hours: 1 p.m.-5 p.m. Fri., Sat., & Sun.

Sioux City Art Center

513 Nebraska St., Sioux City, Iowa.

**University of Nebraska at
Omaha Gallery**

616 S. 11th St. (2nd floor in CAT Bldng.)

Hours: 10 a.m.-5 p.m. Mon.-Fri.

**Other Midwest Gallery List-
ings****Art Institute of Chicago**

Michigan at Adams St., Chicago, Illinois.

(312) 443-3600

Hours: 10:30 a.m.-4:30 p.m. Mon., Wed.
& Fri.; 10:30 a.m.-8 p.m. Tues.; 10 a.m.-5
p.m. Sat.; noon-5 p.m. Sun.

Admission: \$5, seniors & students \$2.50.

Des Moines Art Center

4700 Grand Ave., Des Moines, Iowa.

(515) 277-4405

Hours: 11 a.m.-5 p.m. Tues., Wed., Fri., &
Sat.; 11 a.m.-9 p.m. Thurs.; noon-5 p.m.
Sun.; closed Mon.**Gallery 306**102 S. Dakota Ave., Sioux Falls, South
Dakota.**The Nelson Atkins Museum of
Art**

4525 Oak St., Kansas City, Missouri.

(816) 561-4000

Hours: 10 a.m.-5 p.m. Tues.-Sat.; 1 p.m.-
5 p.m. Sun.

Admission: \$4 adults; \$1 students.

Permanent collection free on Sat.

The Peace Museum

C/O New Cultural Center

78 E Washington

4th Floor

Chicago, Illinois 60602

(312) 541-1474

The Peace Museum is temporarily
maintaining offices in the New Cultural
Center, after closing the permanent
location on W. Erie.For information on traveling exhibitions,
or future plans for the Peace Museum, (or
to convince them to move to Omaha,
where the rent is cheap), just call or write
to them at the above address.**Witter Gallery**

609 Cayuga St., Storm Lake Iowa.

area events

Note: Information was current as of press time, but changes may occur. Call for updates.

DIRECTORY OF VENUES:

Ballet Omaha, performs at the Orpheum Theatre, 346-7332.

Bellevue Little Theatre, 203 W. Mission Ave., 291-1554.

Bemis Foundation/New Gallery, 614 S. 11th St., 341-7130. Open 11 a.m.-5 p.m. daily.

Blue Barn Theater, 1258 S. 13th St., 345-1576.

Center Stage, 30th & "Q" Sts., 733-5777.

Chanticleer Theater, 830 Franklin Ave., Council Bluffs, (712) 323-9955.

Circle Theater, 6064 Maple St., 553-4715.

Civic Auditorium, 18th & Capitol, 444-4750.

Creighton University, Performing Arts Center, 30th & Burt Sts.;

Art Gallery, 27th & California Sts., 280-2509.

Emmy Gifford Children's Theater, 3504 Center St., 345-4849.

Firehouse Dinner and Theatre, 11th & Jackson Sts., 346-8833.

Grande Olde Players, 701 S. 39th St., 345-2462.

Henry Doorly Zoo, 10th & Deer Park Ave., 733-8400.

Howard St. Tavern, 1112 Howard St, Old Market, 341-0433

Joslyn Art Museum, 2200 Dodge St., 342-3300.

Mary Riepma Ross Film Theater, Sheldon Memorial Art Gallery, 12th & "R" Sts., Lincoln. 472-5353.

Magic Theater, 325 S. 16th St., 346-1227.

New Cinema, 1514 Davenport St., 346-8033. Film screenings most weekends at 5:20, 7:30 & 9:40 Fri. & Sat.; Sun. at 3 p.m.

Omaha Civic Auditorium, 18th & Capitol, 444-4750.

Omaha Children's Museum, 500 S. 20th, 342-6164. Open 10 a.m.-5 p.m. Tues.-Sat.; 1 p.m.-5 p.m. Sun.

Omaha Community Playhouse, 69th & Cass Sts., 553-0800.

Omaha Symphony Orchestra, see listings for venues, 342-3560

Omaha Workshop Theater, 3419 "L" St. 558-2953. Shows Fri. & Sat. at 8 p.m.

Opera /Omaha, performs at Orpheum Theater, 346-0357.

Orpheum Theater, 409 S. 16th St., 444-4750.

Peter Kiewit Conference Center, 1313

Farnam St.
Rosenblatt Stadium, 13th & Bert Murphy Dr., 734-5271.

Strauss Performing Arts Center, on the UNO campus, 63rd & Dodge.

Sunset Speedway, 114th & State, 493-5271.

University of Nebraska at Omaha, 63rd & Dodge.

Upstairs Dinner Theater, 221 S. 19th St., 344-7777.

Wesley House, African Community Theater, 2001 N. 35th St.

Western Heritage Museum, 801 S. 10th St., 444-5071.

SPECIAL EVENTS

V.V.A. Chapter #146 General Membership Meetings, 2nd Tues. each month at the V.F.W. Post, 33rd & Leavenworth. Call Tom at 453-2568 for more info.

Bisexual Support Group meets 1st Mon. of each month, 7 p.m. at the Cornerstone, in the upstairs conference room, 640 N. 16th St., Lincoln.

Wed., Feb. 12th-Joseph Geha, a fiction writer whose work focuses upon the struggles within the immigrant culture of families from

Middle East, reads at 7:30 p.m. in the Milo Bail Student Center, Dodge Room, 3rd floor (U.N.O campus). Mr. Geha is winner of a National Endowment for the Arts Fellowship, and his work has won a Pushcart Prize for fiction. General Admission \$3/ Students \$1.

Sat., Feb. 15th-Nebraska League of Rural Voters Annual Meeting at the Villa Inn in Norfolk, NE. Registration begins at 12:30 p.m.

Call 308-381-6943, 402-372-3609, or 402-373-4940, for more info.

Wed., Feb. 26th-Mary Swander, poet, reads at 7:30 p.m. in the Milo Bail Student Center, Dodge Room, 3rd floor, (U.N.O. Campus).

General Admission \$3/Students \$1.

ENVIRONMENT, PEACE & SOCIAL JUSTICE

Earth Day Committee meets every Tues. at Willa Cather Branch Library, 44th & Center, 6:30 p.m.

Ecology Now meets every Sun in Elmwood Park at 4 p.m.

Youth for Peace meets every Wed., 6 p.m., upstairs at the Antiquarium, 1215 Harney.

C.L.E.A.N. (City Lead Environmental Action Nebraska) meets 1st Thurs. each month at Dorothy Lanphier's, 5302 Izard, 554-1108.

No-Name Recycling Group meets every Sat., 10 a.m.-noon at the First Presbyterian Church 216 S. 34th St. (34th & Farnam). The Nov. 3rd meeting, however, will not be held at the church. Location to be

announced. Contact Patricia Dugan: 345-2206.

Ongoing: Nebraskans for Peace Health Care Signature Campaign. Call 453-0776 for more info.

Sat., Feb. 8th-On this date in 1924, the first man is executed in a gas chamber, at Nevada State Prison, Carson City Nevada.

Sat. Feb. 15th- National Federation of Local Cable Programmers, W. Dale Clark Library, 12:00 noon.

Tues., Feb. 18th-Omaha Friends video and discussion on the topic of the Mideast and where we are now, from 6-8:30 p.m. at the Swanson Library, 90th & Dodge, downstairs conference room. Refreshments provided. 453-9707 for more info.

Wed., Feb. 19th-Interfaith Prayer Assembly, First Lutheran Church, 542 S. 31 St. 7:00 pm.

Fri., Feb. 21st-This date marks the 27th anniversary of the assassination of Black Muslim leader, Malcolm X.

Sat., Feb. 29th-Nebraska Sustainable Agriculture Society 1992 Annual Meeting, New World Inn, Columbus, NE; 8 a.m.-5 p.m. Call 402-254-2289 for more info.

EXHIBITS & DISPLAYS

Through Feb. 14th-Omaha Children's Museum exhibit: "Where's Waldo?"

Through April 1st-Western Heritage Museum, "Mildred Brown and the Omaha Star: Building a Community."

FILM

Feb. 8th-Birthday of James Dean, born in Indiana in 1931.

Mary Riepma Ross Film Theater, Sheldon Memorial Art Gallery, Lincoln.

Through Sat., Feb 1st- "The 23rd International Tournee of Animation." Screenings at 7 and 9 p.m. Matinees on Sat. at 1 and 3 p.m.

Sun., Feb 2nd- "Rodrigo D. (No Future)." The streets of Medellin, Colombia, the drug and murder Capitol of the world, are documented by Victor Gaviria who filmed in real locations for his story. Screenings at 3, 5, 7, and 9 p.m.

Thurs., Feb. 6th through Sun., Feb. 9th and Thurs. Feb. 13th through Sat., Feb. 15th- "My Father's Glory," a film by Yves Robert. Screenings at 7 and 9 p.m. Matinees on Sats. at 1 and 3 p.m. and on Sun. at 3 and 5 p.m.

Sun., Feb 16th- "My Twentieth Century," by Ildiko Enyedi. Screenings at 3, 5, 7, and 9 p.m.

Tues., Feb. 18th through Sun., Feb. 23rd and Tues., Feb. 25th through Sat., Feb., 29th- "New Spanish Cinema: Post Franco." Complete schedules and synopses are available at the film theater.

Sun., March 1st- "The Interrogation," by Richard Bugaski. Once banned by a suitably embarrassed Polish government.

MUSIC & DANCE

The Coffee House Series continues this winter at the Blue Barn Theater. Every Mon. at 8 p.m. the series features original material by local acoustic artists. Bring your own coffee cup. Call 345-1576 for more info.

"New Music Tuesdays." Most Tues. nights the Howard Street Tavern features alternative music from local and national acts.

Every Sun. 6-9 p.m.-Omaha International Folk Dancers. Grace Lutheran Church, 26th & Woolworth. Beginners welcome.

Sat., Feb 1st-Internationally famous musician and educator, Kahil El' Zabar, will talk about and demonstrate traditional percussion instruments from several African communities. This takes place in the Bemis Foundation Gallery, 7 p.m., admission free.

THEATER**Omaha Community Playhouse****Mainstage:**

Through Feb. 16th- "The Mystery of Edwin Drood."

Fonda-MacGuire Series:

Feb. 7th through March 1st- "Mountain."

Emmy Gifford Children's Theater

Through Feb. 16th- "A Woman Called Truth."

Firehouse Dinner Theater

Through March 8th- "See How They Run."

Center Stage

Through Feb. 23rd- "Do Lord Remember Me," a play based on the reminiscences of former slaves.

Chanticleer Theater

Feb. 14th through Feb. 23rd- "Death of a Salesman."

Circle Theater

Feb. 14th through March 21st- "Sadie's Last Chance Ice Cream Parlor-Health Spa."

Blue Barn Theater

Feb. 7th through March 1st- "Fortinbras Gets Drunk."

Magic Theater

Call for Feb. performance info.

Calendar Information
Jeanette Morgan
455-7205

The Gulf War's Grim Effects on U.S. Veterans

by Colman McCarthy

Washington—Among the foreign-policy gambles taken by George Bush, none enraged Adelita Medina more than the one involving her son. Bush ordered Miguel Medina, a 21-year-old sailor to Saudi Arabia, along with 500,000 soldiers who would face Iraqi troops a year ago this month.

Unlike most parents who felt powerless to protect their children against Bush and his advisers, Medina, a single parent from New Mexico, went beyond letters to her congressman. She joined the Military Families Support Network and is now its director in Washington. MFSN is an organization of soldiers' relatives who thought this was the wrong war in the wrong place for the wrong reasons.

There was to be a fourth wrong: the statement of Bush to America last Feb. 27 when the combat ended, "This war is now behind us."

A year later, it isn't. Uncounted Persian Gulf veterans carry the physical and emotional aftereffects of the war with them. Some have sought help from the Military Families Support Network. Others suffer helplessly on the margins—unable to counter the Pentagon's publicity machine that has happy-talked the public into believing that the same brief and low-casualty war that made Gen. Schwarzkopf a millionaire from book deals and speeches has brought patriotic feelings of accomplishment to the troops that fought it.

The Walter Reed Army Institute of Research reported last September that few post-war medical problems had turned up. "What we are seeing is an extraordinarily healthy force," a researcher told the Army Times. "They feel they did a damn good job against a damn bad person."

That's damn nonsense, if what Adelita Medina is hearing means anything. Her group's files bulge with studies, surveys, testimony from mental-health specialists and letters from veterans and their families that the Gulf War is directly linked to the high divorce rates, alcohol and drug abuse, traumatized children, marital problems and physical ailments that have been turning up in the last year.

Reports have come from Ft. Campbell, Ky.; Ft. Stewart, Ga.; Ft. Bragg, N.C.; and Ft. Riley, Kan., of unexplained miscarriages from dozens of military women or wives of soldiers who served in the Gulf. In all parts of the country, soldiers suffering from skin diseases, neurological disorders and lack of muscle control are wondering if the causes are the unapproved experimental drugs they were required to take in the desert.

"Every time we have brought up our concerns about these problems," reports Medina, "military officials have downplayed them. They present the war as a huge success. If that's true, why do we keep hearing from soldiers and their families who still suffer the consequences?"

On the evening of January 16, the first anniversary of the U.S. bombing of Iraq, the

Military Family Support Network is sponsoring a peace vigil in front of the White House. The sentiment expressed there—that the war's violence remains—is the same that will be voiced by several women driving trucks of milk and medicine from Amman to Baghdad on January 16. MADRE, a project of the Women's Peace Network, a New York group with 20,000 members, is delivering the supplies to Iraqi hospitals and child-care centers. MADRE is acting on information that international organizations have been consistently reporting: as many as 900,000 Iraqi children are sick from the effects of U.S. bombing of water, sewage and electrical systems. Some 100,000 have died, with child mortality rates tripling.

On November 17, Middle East Watch, in "Needless Deaths in the Gulf War," a 402-page book, said that less than 9 percent of the 84,200 tons of bombs dropped on Iraq were precision-guided. The rest were unguided—dumb, not smart—bombs that had an accuracy rate of 25 percent. Information on those attacks—U.S. planes bombing neighborhoods and slaughtering civilians—were

never supplied by the Pentagon for American television, while the self-serving and overtly deceitful cant of Norman Schwarzkopf did: allied bombers had a strong "interest in making sure that civilians did not suffer unduly." If the interest was present, why the indiscriminate bombing of non-military targets?

During the U.S. buildup in the Saudi Desert, most U.S. newspapers did their wartime bit by running supportive editorials.

Twenty-four of the nation's 25 largest dailies favored Bush's policies. Middle East Watch states that as far as it knows no editorial comment has appeared about its November 17th report. A news story here and there, but no editorials.

During the war, the media complained that the Pentagon was stifling a discussion of the facts. A year later, have editorial pages joined in?

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Bomb Facts

Tons of bombs dropped by U.S. aircraft on Iraq and occupied Kuwait in 43 days of war	88,400
Percentage of bombs that missed their targets	70
Number of gun-camera videos released by the Pentagon that show bombs missing their targets	0

Source: Air Force Gen. Merrill A. McPeak

Casino In Bluffs Puts Iowa on Road To Become the K-Mart of Vice

By Donald Kaul

More good news for Iowa! State officials have cut a deal with the Omaha Indians (not a baseball team, a tribe) to open up a gambling casino about 40 miles north of Council Bluffs.

I know what you're going to say, you no-growth liberal fun-killers out there. What good can come from yet another way for Iowans to throw good money after bad?

Progress, that's what good. Tax revenues. Help for the poor, the sick, the needy, the Legislature. Where would Iowa be if not for gambling?

It wouldn't have a world-class education system. It would be running a big budget deficit. It would be losing population. Farmland would be dropping in value.

Iowa without gambling is not a pretty picture.

Of course, we're talking about Iowa's version of gambling, which is to real gambling what girls' basketball is to basketball. In Iowa gambling no one gets hurt. Every time someone loses more than \$13 at one time, two employees of the state drag him off and put him in a de-gambling center for a week. Anyone who loses a total of \$200 in a calendar year is forced to listen to a debate between the Democratic candidates for president.

Believe me, addiction to gambling is not a problem in Iowa—unless you count politicians.

An added advantage of the Omaha deal is that it opens the way for river-boat gambling

at Sioux City. For months now western Iowa promoters have been looking longingly at their counterparts' operations on the Mississippi, but they were worried that the Omahas would get real casino gambling and blow them out of the water, so to speak. (Faced with the choice of losing a sum they can afford or losing a ruinous amount, gamblers will choose ruin every time; it's the nature of the beast.) Now that threat is stilled.

And, as an extra added advantage, the deal could very easily lead to the sale of Prairie Meadows race track to another Indian tribe—the Menominees of Wisconsin have been mentioned—which would then establish a casino on the premises and run it, as well as horses.

This, of course, would make Des Moines irresistible to conventioneers, who use the annual meetings of their state associations to try out the latest in sin. Which in turn would mean that Cedar Rapids would have to have a similar gambling facility to compete for convention business. As would Waterloo, Mason City and I don't know where all.

You know how the Iowa county system is predicated on the 19th-century formula of no farm being more than a day's round-trip buggy ride from a courthouse? There will come a day in Iowa when no clown with a cheap suit and a used car is more than an hour away from losing his shirt.

I can hardly wait until the Vandervoot tribe of Pella opens a casino there. It'll be the only gaming house to ban prostitution out of fear that it might lead to dancing.

Oh, you were hoping that low-stakes gambling wouldn't beget prostitution? Well, you can hope all you want but it always does. The most we can reasonable hope for is that it will be low-stakes prostitution.

Which brings us to another unlooked-for benefit of all this: An end to the controversy over what to put on Iowa's license plates. The unassailable choice is:

"Iowa—the Kmart of Vice."

And the final benefit is that, at long last, it gives American Indians a chance to get even with us white eyes for all the terrible things we've done to them through the years. Yes, we murdered their ancestors, robbed their graves, stole their land and cooped them up on barren reservations, but now they are getting theirs back.

I'd make them pay through the nose to take Prairie Meadows off our hands, though. I wouldn't accept a bead less than 14 necklaces for it. Pound for pound, the race track is at least as big a disaster as Manhattan and should bring a comparable price, adjusted for inflation.

One other thing: I think that if an Indian tribe does put a casino at Prairie Meadows, it should change the name. Prairie Meadows is OK for a race track, but hardly fitting for a gambling den.

How about: "The Polk County Playground for the Mentally Indigent." What that lacks in glitz it makes up for in honesty.

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